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Assam Don Bosco University T.S. Eliot
T.S. Eliot

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The contrast that the poetry of Hardy and Hopkins offered to contemporary models lies in their use of ambiguity and shifting tonalities, their adoption of an ironic mode in short. At times, Hardy's poetry seems to be boldly experimental, characterized by frequent flashes of daring imagination. His experiments orchestrate the use of dialect words, abbreviations, archaisms, and 'kennings' (or verbal riddles in the style of Anglo-Saxon poetry), some of which would be found barbaric according to orthodox aesthetics. Nevertheless, Hardy functions largely within the traditional forms, presenting the drama of unresolved contradictions: he has himself described his poems as unadjusted impressions. If he tended to relate the local and individual to cosmic pessimism, he was characteristically tentative, holding his judgment in suspense. Ultimately his vision is ironic, involving the rapid and unsettling juxtaposition of images and counter-perceptions that anticipates modernist techniques. Both Robert Bridges and Hopkins experiment with prosody. The former's attempts stem from Greek and Latin prosody, resulting in much charm and delicacy at the cost of poetic concentration and intensity. For these qualities we must go to Hopkins whose 'sprung rhythm,' borrowed from Anglo-Saxon prosody, was reinforced by fresh imagery and compact structure. By keeping the number of stressed syllables fixed and varying the number of unstressed syllables, Hopkins was able to revive the 'Metaphysical' mode linking it to modern poetry. This mode, submerged through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was characterized, as we all know, by ingenious analogy-the extended or cryptic 'conceit'-the yoking of contraries and irregular rhythm and diction. Such a sensibility was sharply different from the Romantic and Victorian, banishing the bogey of 'high seriousness' from the concept of poetry and locating the poem's value not in ideas or autobiography but in the psychological process of creation in the poet's mind. In this sense, the modern movement amounts to a rejection of expressivist categories in favor of the Aristotelian theory of mimetic representation, although the former were never suppressed. The modern poet's unconscious was a storehouse of heterogeneity stirring him obscurely, prompting him, as it were, to get rid of excessively accumulated experience. The disparateness and breadth of the cultural tradition made for impersonality of expression. The 'metaphysical' poet brought together dissimilar-secular and divine love, for instance so that the discord plunged him deep into the theme, the greater awareness of the conflict demanding greater poetic technique. Such are the larger implications of Hopkins's achievement of forging a style capable of conveying the discords and conflicts in his mind. Apart from the contrapuntal play of regular metrical form and irregular speech rhythms, the intermeshing of 'inscape' and 'instress' anticipates the techniques adopted in much modern poetry. If 'Inscap' is a variation on the principle of individuation (as defined by Coleridge), a focus on quidditas or haecceitas-the thisness and whatness of things-'instress' is the force and energy holding together the 'inscape.' In Hopkins's concern with the outer reflection of a thing as a thing, we encounter the modern mind's awareness of objects in their essential particularity and its simultaneous search in and through artistic form, that is, the poem itself, of the universal. In the 1880s and 1890s the interrelated and overlapping tendencies of aestheticism, impressionism, and symbolism contributed to the rejection of Victorian priggish moralism and scientific materialism. Aestheticism or the movement known as *l'art pour l'art* (art for art's sake) stressed impersonal craftsmanship and a stylized rhetoric of passion. These new elements later became the basis for the ironic and somewhat cold detachment so distinctive of modernist poetry. Stylization was closely related to decadence, that is, the desire to understand the deeper and darker resources of the psyche guided in turn by a sense of overwrought aestheticism. The symbolist movement often aimed at suggesting an inner richness and mystery, and was thus part of the pervasive reaction against the positivist attitudes bred by technological smugness: it fell back upon symbols in order to capture the life above or below pragmatic reality. In France, symbolist suggestiveness was contested by the Parnassian School of poetry with its emphasis on precise and economical description, of clinical self-observation. The drive towards hard precision and clarity represents perhaps the most decisive break with traditional poetic diction found expression above all in Imagism just before World War I. Accuracy, concreteness, and unadorned economy characterized the direct presentation of the objective world without discursive reflection. To this project an evocative dimension was added not only by symbolism but also by impressionism which loosened or dissolved an object into a group of impressions. The modern poet was thereby able to render the passage and dissolution of impressions so distinctive to the new, unsettling experience of the modern megalopolis, of rootless and heterogeneous cosmopolitan culture. Juxtaposing impressions or images apparently

disconnected, the poet learnt from the arrangement of multiple planes in sculpture or movements in music the fundamental technique of discontinuous composition. This is how modernism held up a faithful mirror to fragmented reality and in doing so, produced an open gestalt or transformed, indeterminate structure of coherence. The Waste Land may be a mimesis of the heap of broken images that modern European civilization has been reduced to but the final effect, that is, the poem, remains a mastery of fragmentation.

1.3 The Georgians and the War Poet

The colloquial accents and unsentimental economy of Eliot and the later Yeats were, as we have already seen, anticipated at the turn of the century. These features are discernible even among the more conservative Georgian poets at the time of the First World War, although the excesses and exoticisms of decadence as well as the discontinuities of impressionism are absent. These poets include Rupert Brooke and Edward Thomas. Brooke was the most popular and typically Georgian who, somewhat ironically, began as a rebel against Victorian gentility with its fondness for vapid sweetness. But like many of his contemporaries, he could not break out of the orderly bounds of liberal humanism. Edward Thomas's strength lay in nature poetry, which he started to write on the encouragement of Robert Frost. Somewhat like Frost, Thomas meditates on a natural scene and using a plain and direct idiom, creates the effect of a questioning honesty resisting all temptations to abstract conceptual finality. Such a modernity of temperament was reinforced by a certain casual and homely intonation. The American Robert Frost's public image of a Yankee farmer-poet is not entirely unjustified: he turned against the Romantic tradition by choosing the localized authenticity of rural New England. Although the reader may miss in his or Thomas's work the impact of modern psychology, science, and politics, their use of the spoken language has been rightly admired for its unmistakable modernity.' Frost in particular was eminently successful in creating and modulating a fictional speaking voice. The trauma of the First World War was first expressed by poets in the trenches challenging patriotic and military humbug; it then coloured the sensibility of an entire age. The later war poets like Siegfried Sassoon, Isaac Rosenberg, and Wilfred Owen increasingly saw the War as organized and motivated insanity: their poetry bore witness to the ugly truth seen through the eyes of the common soldier. In Sassoon, war encouraged a direct, colloquial vigor to reinforce the gruesome imagery, anger, and ridicule. Both Sassoon and Owen used realism in order to shock readers out of their complacency and expose the naked reality of dehumanized violence. After the war, Sassoon's poetry acquired an ironic quality through an unsettled juxtaposition of viewpoints. Owen, despite his unparalleled mastery of realistic detail, achieved a truly complex, sometimes visionary detachment and distancing. Isaac Rosenberg also attempted this imaginative distancing and often used a rapid succession-of images. Thus we can see that war poetry prepared the ground for the Modernist poetry of the 1920s.

Imagism

Both in subject matter and form, modern American poetry was more innovative than British. While free verse (vers libre) did not last as a vogue, the technique of impressionistic juxtaposition without the links of smooth transition had a much longer life in Ezra Pound, and above all, in T.S. Eliot. Support came not only from the new insights of psychology and psychoanalysis but from the larger mood of a disintegrating civilization. The technique of discontinuous composition was highlighted in Imagism, particularly under the aegis of Pound who no doubt took his cue from T.E. Hulme and Ford Madox Ford. Hulme, in his *Speculations*, not only set out a philosophical basis for rejection of Romantic sentimental meliorism but appended some imagistic fragments as aesthetic equivalents of a new, austere classicism. A threefold Imagistic manifesto was announced in the magazine *Poetry* in March 1913: (i) direct treatment of the 'thing' whether subjective or objective (ii) scrupulous avoidance of any word that did not contribute to the presentation (iii) rhythmical composition in the sequence of the musical phrase, not of a metronome. Among the poets originally grouped as Imagist were Pound himself, Amy Lowell, H.D. Richard Aldington, and John Gould Fletcher. Soon divisions surfaced, especially between Pound and Amy Lowell; in any case, the anthologies often included poets like D.H. Lawrence and James Joyce. In the ultimate analysis, Imagism had a historical importance; it survives, variously modified, in the bloodstream of modern poetry, in the search for a hard precision and economy. Lawrence never really fitted the Imagist bill, despite his animal and flower poems, because although he valued accuracy and rhythmic freedom, he rebelled against what he perceived as the cerebral, somewhat academic impersonality of imagist poetry. His eroticism and intensity authenticated immediate experience-the unceasing fecundity of life unharnessed by teleology-in the tradition of Walt Whitman.

1.4 Yeats and Irish Poetry The Irish situation was different particularly because of the largely agrarian society and the complex history of Irish nationalism. The struggle against British colonialism not only produced political verse but extended to a search for identity through Irish history, mythology, folklore and peasant culture. The so-called 'Celtic Twilight' (actually the name of a collection of stories or sketches Yeats published in 1873) brought together poets like George Russell (AE) and Lionel Johnson along with Yeats. Its primitivism was, however, somewhat sentimental and nostalgic, and its opposition to scientific, rationalistic dogma was largely a Romantic survival. Although the poets turned away from the sunny, Southern European or Alpine landscape celebrated in Romantic poetry to authentically Celtic mists and overcast skies, the general mood was one of world-weariness and disillusionment prompting ultimately escapist journeys into a land of heart's desire, away from the joyless squalor of modern urban life. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, Irish literature consciously moved away from dreaminess to a genuine historical awareness, a passionate vigor and coarseness of experience. This reaction was the hall-mark of the Irish Dramatic Movement. Some Irish writers like John Millington Synge went to peasant life for fresh sources of poetry. George Russell's criticism of Yeats's shadowy insubstantiality was vigorously endorsed by the latter himself when he broke decisively with his earlier poetic style in *The Green Helmet* (1910) and *Responsibilities* (1914). The poetic life of W.B. Yeats falls into two phases, earlier and later, opposed to each other and yet linked by the same longing for escape from this world. If in his early poetry, Yeats wishes to escape to a dreamy fairyland, in the later poetry the nostalgia is of the spirit, for a world of pure ideas. The poetic influence of the Pre-Raphaelites as well as his early interest in the occult fortified his opposition to mechanistic conceptions of the universe, an opposition that remains a common link among modern writers otherwise widely different from each other. Yeats's early poetry is characterized by somnolent rhythms, symbolist evocativeness and obscure mystic calls. What gave this mixture credibility was his peculiarly ambivalent Anglo-Irish identity: as a member of the Protestant Anglo-Norman Ascendancy, Yeats was passionately involved in Irish politics and yet distrustful of its nationalist zeal. He was no doubt drawn into politics by his unrequited love for Maud Gonne; at the same time, he remained aloof discovering a mythically resonant, tragic heroism in the futile Easter Rebellion. The quest for identity led Yeats to resolve his own self into a dialectic, into the antithetical categories of self and soul. Socially he tried to locate himself in the declining aristocracy among the big houses and estates, ideologically bound to the peasant, the servant or the tramp against the emerging threat of a bourgeoisie that was relatively new to Ireland. Failure in love, practical experience, especially of running the Abbey Theater and contempt for the nouveau riche brought in a sturdier note into his poetry chastened by bitterness and disillusionment. The discovery in himself of double selves was aided by the knowledge received at seances supposedly through the 'medium' of his wife; this knowledge grew into Yeats's philosophical system *A Vision* (1925; rev. ed. 1937). Here, as elsewhere, we encounter the central symbolism of interpenetrating gyres or cones and the phases of the moon. Along with the doctrine of the Mask, these metaphors enabled Yeats to impose a certain pattern or order on the history of Western civilization somewhat in the manner of Spengler. Yeats's pursuit of a world of pure ideas, a Byzantine abstraction-monuments of unageing intellect --was anchored in the concrete vitality of the imagination. Thus, his poetry dramatizes the fundamental dichotomy of the flesh and the spirit on different levels: as a result, a dispassionately cold style unleashes passionate intensity by virtue of its magisterial control. From *The Tower* (1928) onwards, Yeats's system of opposed personae or split selves is largely unburdened of its occult trappings: it is as though in his last poems Yeats rises above his system to the existential conflict between affirmation and renunciation, art and nature, passion and conquest, old age and the disturbing promptings of the flesh.

1.5 Modernism, Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot The High Modernist mode popular in British and American poetry from the early 1920s to the 1950s was of course dominated by Pound and Eliot. Modernist poetry was characterized by a prodigious appetite for assimilating the disparate and fragmentary experiences of a complex and heterogeneous civilization. Fin-de-siècle formalism and aestheticism, impressionism, symbolism and imagism all combined to produce the modernist mode. While we have to wait till the thirties for the poetry of political commitment, the impact of discoveries in psychology and anthropology

are clearly discernible. Poetry attempted to explore the new territory of the irrational and associative surge of consciousness, neurosis, dream, and the Collective Unconscious with its storehouse of myth and archetype. This is why the poets adopted what has been described above (42.2) as the technique of discontinuous composition. Pound's wide and disparate reading extended the range of modern poetry, especially in his intertextual use of literary traditions. Poetry, as he believed, must be as well written as prose. By 1911, his poetic idiom was relatively stripped of 'poetic diction': his syntax became more direct and natural. Apart from compression and excision, Pound concentrated on images against the uninspired abstractness of language. His Vorticism, as a movement, was a continuation of Imagism and its dynamic interplay of images. He moved to a non mimetic model of the Image, a form produced by an emotional energy, a cluster, an arrangement of planes as in sculpture. After the War and the economic difficulties, he went through, in *Homage to Sextus Propertius* (1934) Pound uses, over and above the concentrated economy, an ironic persona whose mental ability and emotional variety introduced a shifting point of view. There is even the pose of foppery and tone of self-deprecation associated with Jules Laforgue and Eliot. By the time of *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920) and the first seven *Cantos* (1915-20), the extraordinarily compressed, oblique, learned, elliptical, and allusive style had been well established. In these two works Pound uses the masks of two poets in order to produce a critique of contemporary European civilization. In comparison to the pictorial and musical avant-garde, however, he remained a little backward-looking and modishly archaic. Pound's contributions to the modern movement derived more from his editorial and talent scouting abilities. Real stylistic innovation came from T.S. Eliot even before he had come in contact with the former. In Eliot at last we encounter the fracturing and re-fashioning of received idioms that had been achieved in music and the visual arts. Largely on the basis of his reading of Baudelaire, Laforgue, and Jacobean drama, Eliot quite independently forged a style that not only surpassed Imagist practice but seamlessly incorporated the self-examining, self-deprecating persona timidly withdrawing from traditions of passionate immersion and confession. Such a persona or attitude was no doubt the legacy of Jules Laforgue. If discontinuous composition is the hall-mark of modernist poetry, then Eliot remains its finest practitioner. Moreover, what gives coherence to the so-called heap of broken images is an essentially musical structure of relationship between part and whole. Apart from music (or for that matter, sculpture), Eliot's use of an organized whole, a web of relationships, seems to have been inspired by the notion of gestalt in contemporary psychology. The gestalt psychologists believed that a random collection of marks or dots on a page would reveal a certain pattern or design to the observing spectator. If these marks were re-distributed continuously, the effect would never be that of disorder but of constantly renewed configurations. Thus, we have in Eliot's poetry the genesis of a form that is harmonious without being closed or rigid, characterized, rather, by its appetite for inclusiveness. Such a form is no doubt exemplified by *The Waste Land* (1922). But it is discernible even in the earliest poetry of Eliot as it was for him the aesthetic equivalent of fragmentation, rootlessness, and lack of belief in modern European civilization. From this viewpoint, not only is *The Waste Land* anticipated by 'Gerontion' or 'The Love-Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' but even the germ of *Four Quartets* (1943) contained within the early verse. In 'Prufrock' or 'The Portrait of a Lady,' sardonic self-deprecating attitudes located within a context of drab boredom, timidity, seediness, and sexual unease are juxtaposed with glimpses of horror and glory. This sets the tone for Eliot's masterly use of squalor and beauty in the Sweeney poems. The need for unrelenting self-observation, for introspective distrust found its proper outlet in a withdrawal from passion related to the loss of faith and certitude in modern civilisation. Thus, in 'Gerontion' an accurate, authentic cosmopolitan setting dramatizes the shriveled-up life of reminiscence produced by spiritual atrophy. We have in this poem a central pattern in Eliot's poetry: fear of the full-blooded, spontaneous urgency of life with its structure of desire, wish, and expectation leading to an astringent, ascetic renunciation prompted by the history of tainted, destructive passions that European civilization offers. Even as Eliot veered towards conservative values and preoccupation with religious dogma through *Hollow Men* (1925) and *Ash Wednesday* (1930), stylistically he remained as innovative as ever. After his fairly successful experiments in verse drama, Eliot moved to the more contemplative, somewhat philosophical *Four Quartets* with its intertwined themes of time, experience, memory, communication and the possibilities of reconciliation. 'Burnt Norton,' the first quartet, seems to begin the polyphonic structure with abstract speculation and memories in a rose-garden. 'East Coker' is the name of the Somerset village from which Eliot's ancestors had

emigrated to America, and the-quartet thus takes us to the past. In 'The Dry Salvages' (a group of rocky islands off the coast of Massachusetts) Eliot's own lived past in America is recaptured. Finally, in 'Little Gidding,' war-time England is related to the past of the village which had held a religious community in the seventeenth century and had its church destroyed by Oliver Cromwell's troops. The poem Four Quartets continues effectively to use the technique of discontinuous composition, the structure of music, and a subtly permeated self-reflexivity, we recognize through the moving drama of faith the old dry, ironic, detached persona, the unremitting self-observation and preoccupation with language, communication, and poetic form. Apart from Marx, Freud was an important influence in the poetry of W.H. Auden, the outstanding poet of the generation. In *The Destructive Element*, Stephen Spender also believed in the fusion of Marx and Freud. From his earliest volume of verse, Auden struck a remarkably individual note but always within a traditional framework. Ideological de mystification and psychoanalytic revelations led to the sense of a doomed civilization with constant references to disease and the death-wish, the latter symbolized as a mysterious Enemy. Even as the heroic and the modern are brought together, the imagery is ingeniously drawn by Auden from guerrilla warfare, ruined industry, railheads, and frontiers. Using light verse, parody, and the popular song, he was often successful in making the banal a vehicle of serious meanings. The flippancy may have been reminiscent of Eliot, dismissive of solemnity, but Auden betrays a self-protective irony and tonal uncertainty. As he progresses as a poet, he moves from a taut and elliptical style to an easier, more fluent one, but in the process he loses the pressure and urgency of feeling. Where the emotion or personal experience controls the technique, Auden is at his best. He is particularly good at poems starting with the mood of a place and expanding to general meditation-the technique of 'paysage moralize,' the use of geography and landscape to symbolize spiritual and mental states. After his emigration to America and the beginning of the Second World War, Auden shows a more serious and explicit concern with religion, and the place of Marx and Freud is taken by Kierkegaard and the modern Protestant theologians.

1.5.1 The Poetry of the Forties The Forties saw a reaction against the poetry of social reporting and political commitment in the surrealist, neo-romantic poetry of the New. *Apocalypse*, anthologized in *The White Horseman* (1941) and focussed almost exclusively on self-unraveling. Dylan Thomas set the example for this expressive style marked by mystery, inarticulate terrors, and a dream-like quality. In Thomas's early poetry there is almost a pantheistic presence of God in Nature, enabling him to relate vitally energies creative as well as destructive. A non-Welsh-speaking Welshman, he was influenced on the one hand by the Welsh bardic tradition with its verbal and mental skills. On the other hand, Welsh Non-conformism made him confront the problems of sin and salvation. From his troubled personal life and embattled Welsh identity, Thomas extracted an elemental and innovative richness of vocabulary and diction that went much deeper than the concerns of the Auden circle. From July 1931 till November 1934, he composed *Eighteen Poems* and *Twenty-five Poems* on the basis of his localized experiences at Swansea. The specter of impending death due to alcoholism coloured his later poetry but at the same time he never gave up the discipline of the craftsman, submitting himself to the restraining demands of narrative verse and drama. With *Deaths and Entrances* (1946) and the radio play *Under Milk Wood* (1954) his poetic reputation was established on a sure basis. Thomas, and to some extent poets like George Darker or G.S. Fraser rejected the self conscious, intellectualized, ironic style of modernism in favor of an intoxication with words, myths, and Gothic effects. But in comparison to the poetry of Yeats, Eliot, and Pound, that of even Dylan Thomas does not extend far beyond a combination of sex and the Bible, Freud and the Old Testament. This neo-romantic style in its extreme forms was unnecessarily involved and prolonged, emphasizing the mysterious, mystical and subconscious. When it influenced a later generation of poets like Kathleen Raine and Edwin Muir it was fortunately divested of its violence. Much before the Fifties finally rejected such 'apocalyptic' fashions, the finest challenge to the excesses and defects of this style came perhaps from the poetry of Keith Douglas whose untimely death in the Second World War was a major loss to British poetry. Although his linguistic economy and compactness became an urgent vehicle of a controlled and unblurred vision of death and mutability, his poetry found true recognition only in the Sixties.

1.5.2 The Poetry of the Fifties The Fifties were marked by rejection of the poetry of the previous decade. The process perhaps began with the wry conservatism of Philip Larkin, Kingsley Aims, and John Wain who were together at Oxford. Robert Conquest's influential anthology, *New Lines* (1956), brought in six other poets: Elizabeth Jennings, John Holloway, Thom Gunn, D.J. Enright, Donald Davie, and Conquest himself. Known as 'The Movement,' this body of poetry cultivated elegant perspicuity and economy against extravagantly figurative language and shapeless syntax of any kind. In place of theoretical systems and ideology, these poets chose withdrawal from intellectual, public issues; instead of plumbing the unconscious depths they attempted to operate on the register of ordinary and orderly common sense. This has resulted often in a dry and somewhat stolid academicism, a poetry of the unenthusiastic imagination, as it has been called. But its primary importance lies in the play of intelligence and intelligibility, manifested in the skilful use of traditional meters and forms mixed with low key speech rhythms and observation of daily detail in the middling sections of contemporary society largely excluded from modern poetry. The most accomplished Movement poet, Philip Larkin, goes far beyond the manifesto in his use of deflationary rhetoric and teasingly casual irony. Larkin's early verse *The North Ship*, suffers from rhetorical flourishes and an uneasy indebtedness to Yeats. He soon changes his poetic master, by-passing the supposed 'dislocations' of modernist diction and arriving at the poetry of Hardy. As a poet he opened up territories previously dismissed with contempt: provincial- suburban life with its humdrum values invites his cool, somewhat affectionate scrutiny. His poetic fame rests on *The Less Deceived* (1955) *The Whitsun Weddings* (1964) and *The High Windows* (1974). If the emotional range appears to be narrow, the shortcoming is redeemed not only by exemplary craftsmanship but also by a stark exposure of all wishful deceptions that keep us settled in life. Though not marked by defiance, subversive energy or literary allusions, his poetry offers a distillation of the bleakness and loneliness of modern life in a minor key. Despite the importance of Larkin as a poet, the Movement and its allies signaled a withdrawal into insular parochialism and elegance bordering upon triviality. The return to traditional modes and styles often concealed a decline in vigor, range, complexity, and passion. As Kingsley Amis wrote in *Poets of the 1950s* (edited by D.J. Enright), 'Nobody

wants any more poems about philosophers or paintings or novelists or art galleries or mythology or foreign cities or other poems.' In the same anthology, Philip Larkin, expressing his dislike of Mozart publicly, was more dismissive: he had no faith, he declared, in 'tradition' or a common myth-kitty or casual allusions in poems to other poems or poets. 1.5.3 The Poetry of the Sixties and After In the mid-Fifties some student poets met regularly in Cambridge to discuss their work. On the basis of this, Philip Hobsbaum founded 'The Group' in London including poets like George MacBeth, Peter Porter, Ted Hughes, and Alan Brownjohn. A more tightly knit circle than the Movement, it was opposed to the sedate formalist poetics of the latter: along with a distrust of polished irony and crystalline forms it took an interest in natural and violent imagery. Obsessively autobiographical in his best work, MacBeth was boldly experimental even if he was not always successful. Peter Porter made intelligently sardonic use of his status as an Australian, a compassionate outsider. He resisted the parochial tendencies in British poetry by allusions to European culture and turned towards dream and the irrational resources of language under the influence of American poets like Wallace Stevens and John Ashbery. In fact, American poetry, as we have seen, remained always more innovative and intellectually challenging. The Forties, for instance, saw the emergence of a new generation of poets in America whose influence extended fruitfully to the British poets of the Sixties. The most important of these American poets were Robert Lowell and John Berryman, along with their contemporaries and successors like Elizabeth Bishop, Theodore Roethke, Anne Sexton, and Sylvia Plath. Lowell and Berryman, unlike the British poets, intelligently assimilated the legacy of the Pound-Eliot era although they broke with the conventions of impersonality in favor of personal experience captured usually on the verge of disintegration. Thus Lowell, in particular, beginning in a literary milieu, struggled with his bouts of mania towards what has come to be known as 'confessional' poetry, which directly influenced Sexton and Plath. Despite the obsession with psychoanalytic processes, Lowell's *Life Studies* (1959) remains a landmark in the poetic representation of self- dismantling (which of course is ultimately an authentically modern mode of self-making) in a language of stark, compelling power.

Sylvia Plath, a legatee of the 'confessional' tradition, settled in England after her marriage to Ted Hughes. Her proneness to suicide can be traced to the profound insecurities of her life brought on by her ambivalent attitude to parental authority. Even as she wrote out of a strange kind of terror and despair, she was able to approach, through her masterly control of language, the calm centre of hysteria. Unlike Auden, she located her psychological crises in a larger social and historical context, the equivocating anxieties of gender in a patriarchal society. Her early poetry consisted largely of exercises or 'pastiche' of Dylan Thomas, Yeats, and Marianne Moore. From 1960 onwards, she was able to observe and analyze with unflinching honesty her imprisoned psyche, creating and exploring a surreal landscape specific to it. From her mingled response of fascinated terror of death, she perilously extracted the heroic courage of liberation. She controlled her obsession with death by means of an intelligent use of rebirth or renewal already evident in her first collection, *The Colossus* (1960), and her novel *The Bell-Jar* (1963). As she moved on to *Ariel* (1965), her last poems, another theme, that of redeeming the meaninglessness of existence through art, lends an existential headiness to her picture of disintegration. The British poets of the Sixties were exposed not only to American 'confessional' poetry but also to the freewheeling and open-structured verse of the 'Beat' movement-the latter influenced the British 'pop' poets. From East European poets like Vasco Popa ((Yugoslavia) and Miroslav Holub (Czechoslovakia), the British poet could pick up elements of black comedy. The resulting enlargement of poetic vision is seen in Ted Hughes and Thom GUM. Hughes shattered the wry placidity of the Movement with his very first volume of poems *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957), reviving, as it were, the Romantic concept of inspiration-based i. he instinctual and atavistic. His harsh, jagged, and abrasive style rejected urbane effects in favor of a turbulent energy and violence that at times went out of control. A serious interest in archaeology and anthropology gradually drew him towards the primitive, the exotic, and the alternative mythical traditions that lie behind *Crow* (1970). Even as he has extended his horizon, Hughes has remained rooted in Yorkshire life, returning to fresh and mundane country-life, to a regionalism that is in fact one of the common features of much recent British poetry, in *Gaudette* (1977) or *Remains of Elmet* (1979). Beginning with primordial savagery captured in language and imagery, particularly in his poems on caged or uncaged predatory animals, Hughes introduced a distancing irony as early as *Lupercal* (1966). The quasi-Darwinian struggle for survival is increasingly shorn of self-indulgent or sensational elements and fits into a relentlessly bleak landscape in *Wood Wool* (1967). By the time of *Crow*, Hughes approximates to a Beckett-like grim and sardonic vision, a black comedy that nihilistically strips off all human pretensions. It is a bitter parody of all myths of Creation in which sexuality is not procreative but becomes a mutual devouring. The element of comic whimsy finds expression also in traditional meters and forms, especially in poems for children. Like Hughes, Thom Gunn's poetic arrival was also explosive. In *Fighting Terms* (1954) and *The Sense of Movement* (1957) we encounter a reckless immersion in energy and 'happening' as opposed to timid and cautious wisdom. Although Gunn has been accused of admiring instinctual brutality, his untrammelled egotistical heroes articulate an essentially existential situation. His honesty and self-analysis lead to a shift in *MySad Captains* (1961) to a more humane tone. The poetry that he produced under the influence of hallucinatory drugs only intermittently achieves a surreal insight. This weakening of poetic control is reflected in his later poetry where his honesty is diluted by sentimental nostalgia. Of late a note of nihilism and confused disillusionment has entered his poetry suggesting perhaps a turning point in the future. Among his contemporaries, Geoffrey Hill seems to strike a different note by virtue of his religious preoccupation. He relates it to the history or memory of Europe and the more personal imperatives of memory through a dense intertextuality. Despite The popularity of Dylan Thomas, Welsh poetry took much longer than Irish poetry to extract a new power from its native resources. The austere verse of R.S. Thomas, a Welsh clergyman, achieves this by bringing to life a bleak and arid landscape in which he describes the harshness of the farmer's life. Starting with Wales and peasant farmers in the priest's parish he reaches out-to-the experience of God: The peasants' mental vacancy that matches the emptiness of the setting reduces them to a dehumanizing existence: Thomas takes an unsentimental view of a community cut off from its nourishing traditions. The new directions in his later poetry like *H'm* (1972) suggest an extension of viewpoint beyond the Anglo-Welsh, In recent decades, Northern Ireland has produced a new breed of powerful Irish poets.

Both Derek Mahon and Paul Muldoon were part of the Belfast Group: both the poets attempt to situate the plight of growing up in Northern Ireland within a larger background. Mahon achieves this through his irony and sense of an apocalyptic bleakness. The opposition in Paul Muldoon between rural and cosmopolitan, an Irish dichotomy reminiscent of the poetry of Patrick Kavanagh, expresses itself in a tension between the Northern Irish Catholic identity and English literary tradition. Although Seamus Heaney now lives in Southern Ireland, his poetic roots go back to the farms and bogs of Northern Ireland. As he vividly portrays Irish farm life with its skills and activities, the relationship with the land gives a rugged power to his verse, including his use of northern dialects and speech-accent. The bogs become a metaphor for the dark, subterranean deposits of history and the psyche. The evidence of ritualistic violence recently excavated enables him to relate the violent history of Northern Ireland to the Early Iron Age. Although Heaney's intellectual sources are different, his sense of artistic responsibilities recalls that of Yeats, even in the note of ambivalence and distancing from the violence. On the basis of Viking deposits discovered in Dublin, Heaney opens up a link between Ireland and Scandinavia and constructs a 'northern' mythology in the North (1975). But if his bog poems deal with pagan codes of revenge and ritual slaughter, that world is countered by poems highlighting childhood serenity and tender personal relationships. Under the strange beauty of the big lie the archaeological layers of violence: this informs Heaney's unusual assurance in the power of the poetic imagination to transmute its raw, embedded sources into beauty. This confident artistic ego is reflected in the honesty of language and uninvolved, disinterested confrontation of political violence. With *Field Work* (1979), Heaney moves in a new direction, towards the ordinary social world and its plain, conversational manner. From *Station Island* (1984) onwards, even as he returns to the somewhat traditional themes of the role and abiding value of poetry, he articulates the need both to face political violence and to be free of it. Yeats's example is further discernible in Heaney's search for wisdom and interweaving of personal memories with historical images. Memory not only plays a consolatory and absolving role but draws him into a sense of Catholic community. At the same time, his non-committal individuality pulls him in an opposite direction,

as evident in *Sweeney Arday* (1983) and *The Haw Lantern* (1987): perhaps the anti-poetry of Eastern Europe has provided the impetus for a detached, hard economy.

1.6 Characteristics of Modern Poetry

1. Modern poetry is written in simple language, the language of everyday speech and even sometimes in dialect or jargon like some poems of Rudyard Kipling (in the jargon of soldiers).
2. Modern poetry is mostly sophisticated as a result of the sophistication of the modern age, e. g. T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land".
3. Alienation. The poet is alienated from the reader as a result of the alienation of the modern man.
4. Fragmentation: the modern poem is sometimes fragmented like a series of broken images, and a gain like "The Waste Land".
5. Modern poetry is highly intellectual; it is written from the mind of the poet and it addresses the mind of the reader, like the poems of T. S. Eliot.
6. It is interested in the ugly side of life and in taboo subjects like drug addiction, crime, prostitution and some other subjects. Like the poems of Allen Ginsberg.
7. Modern poetry is pessimistic as a result of the bad condition of man in many parts of the world, such as most of the poems of Thomas Hardy.
8. Modern poetry is suggestive; the poem may suggest different meanings to different readers.
9. Modern poetry is cosmopolitan. It appeals to man everywhere and at every time because it deals with the problems of man or humanity.
10. Experimentation is one of the important characteristic features of modern poetry. Poets try to break new grounds, i. e. to find new forms, new language and new methods of expression.
11. It is irregular, written without meter and rhyme scheme and sometimes written in prose like the prose poem.
12. Interest in politics and the political problems of the age.
13. Interest in psychology and in the subconscious. Many poets wrote unconsciously under the effect of wine or drugs.
14. Irregularity of form. Modern poetry is mostly written in free verse and prose (the prose poem).
15. Ambiguity: Most of modern poetry is ambiguous for many reasons.
16. Interest in myth and especially Greek myth.
17. Interest in the problems of the average man and the lower classes of society.

1.7 T S Eliot As A Modernist Poet

T.S Eliot is considered as one of the most important modernist poets. The content of his poem as well as his poetic style give elements of the modern movement that was famous during his time. In fact,

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modernism was viewed as "a rejection of traditional 19th-century norms, whereby artists, architects, poets and thinkers either altered or abandoned earlier conventions in an attempt to re-envision

a society in flux." Modernism was also mainly represented by orientation towards fragmentation, free verse, contradictory allusions and multiple points of view different from Victorian and Romantic writing. These modern features appear greatly in the works of Eliot.

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Two of the most prominent poems where Eliot shows his modern orientations are "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "The Waste Land." "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" is regarded as one of the basic modernist poems.

It shows the modern elements of disintegration of life and mental stability. The poem speaks about the problem of the modern man, Prufrock. He laments his physical and intellectual shortcomings, the lack of opportunities in his life in addition to the lack of spiritual progress. What is impressive is that the setting of

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the poem can be understood to be either as a real place or a mental state reflecting the subconscious of the person. The most important modernist technique in the

poem is the stream-of-consciousness technique. This technique reflects the fragmentary nature of the modern man's mentality. It also allows the reader to explore the inner self of the character. As seen in the poem, Prufrock's thought shifts very often from trivial to significant issues and vice versa. This explains the idea of subjective time in modernism which is contradictory to historical time of past, present and future. As modernism stresses the ideas of pessimism and loneliness, the negative aspects of modern life are also stressed in the poem. In fact, Prufrock seems to be only able to see those negative aspects.

Death is also dominant in the poem showing Prufrock as an insect pinned against the wall. It is even personified as 'the eternal Footman.' What is important is that Prufrock is viewed as a representative of all modern men. He is indecisive. He cannot even decide about eating a peach. It is in this sense that the poem is seen as a record of the random thoughts in the mind of Prufrock. Finally, modernist writers were interested in showing characters having multiple personalities. This is clear in Prufrock who functions as both the speaker and the listener. In addition, modernist texts are full of allusions to other texts. This is also found in the poem where there is much reference to Dante, Shakespeare and the Holy Bible. Although Eliot is known as an outstanding modernist poet, some critics argued that he uses some traditional medieval techniques in his works. Those critics argued that "While T. S. Eliot might be called a medieval modernist because of his admiration for the organic and spiritual community of the Middle Ages together with his "impersonal" conception of art, his elitist and formalist views isolate him from several of the central terms of the tradition as I have defined it." In other words, some characteristics of Eliot's work exhibit medieval themes and style; at the same time, these works are also rooted in the modern orientation of literature. That is why some critics called him a "medieval modernist." The point is that Eliot seems to have nostalgia for the medieval tradition linked with his interest in modern life. In his poetry, Eliot combines both, concern with religious issues (medieval theme) and a trend towards contemporary issues (modern theme). So as critics observed, Eliot seeks some sort of "integration" between the two aspects. This is actually clear in "The Waste Land" where Eliot shows his discomfort for modern life by contrasting it with medieval traits. He shows the difference between the divinely religious medieval life which modern life lacks and the fall in spiritual matters in modern life. In fact, "The Waste Land," can be considered as a fundamental modernist text. The major modernist element found in the poem is the clear reliance on images, which is a basic characteristic of modern texts.

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The poem shows many fragmented images that reflect the feeling of loss in modern man. Although the reader understands nothing of these images, the narrator promises to show the reader how to make meaning from fragmentation. This construction of meaning from fragmentation is one of the essential features of modernism. The poem

clearly describes the modern world, or what the narrator terms as "

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the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history." The

frequent images of falling and decay are representative of modern life. Life is represented as trivial, suffering from the problems of war. This all happens on both the real physical level and the inner psychological level of the modern man. The fragmented images, the stream-of-consciousness and all the other strange stylistic features in the poem are used to help convey the message of the poet. For Eliot, modern life is fragmented and illogical; so he conveys this through his style. That is why in "The Waste Land" he tends to break the logic and conventions. So the poem may be clearly viewed as a representation of modern life and modern man psychology both in terms of its content and style.

To conclude, both *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* and "The Waste Land" are considered critical texts representing modern thought. In more specific terms, they are examples of modernist poetry. The poems' content and style reflect modern life, especially in its influence on the individual. Eliot is skillful in showing this through his style in both poems. He uses stream-of-consciousness to show the chaos in modern man's thinking. In addition, he uses many techniques such as imagism, repetition, fragmentation and other modernist techniques. All these techniques help depict modern life for the reader and reflect its status in a real manner. That is why one can easily say that Eliot is considered as one of the most influential modernist poets in English literature.

1.8 Unit Summary In this unit you have learnt about the history of modern British poetry from the late Victorian age to the present day. You have seen how the search for precision and economy along with irony dominates the modernist movement. Political commitment or social reporting, neo-romanticism, and assertion of Englishness are some of the other interwoven themes.

1.9 Key Terms Elliptical writing occurs when an author opts to not describe an event literally. Instead the writer implies it obliquely—which can be more artful than spelling it out. Allusive is the quality of containing things that make you think of another particular thing, person, or idea: His poetry is simple, lucid, with a touch of allusiveness. Allusiveness runs through all literature

1.9 Check Your Progress 1. In what ways do Browning, Hardy and Hopkins anticipate modernity in poetry? 2. Write short notes on i) aestheticism, ii) impressionism, iii) symbolism. 3. Assess the contribution of the poets of the First World War to modern British poetry. 4. Write short notes on: i) Imagism, ii) discontinuous composition. 5. Bring out the Imagist elements in Eliot and Pound. 6. Write an essay on the speaking voice in modern poetry. 7. Discuss T.S. Eliot as a modernist poet.

Unit 2: Life and Career of T.S. Eliot

2.0 Introduction

2.1 Unit Objective

2.2 The Life Sketch of T.S. Eliot

2.3 A Brief Sketch of T.S. Eliot

2.4 A Selective Chronology of T. S. Eliot's Life

2.5 T. S. Eliot's Work

2.5.1 T.S. Eliot's Poetry

2.5.2 Drama

2.5.3 Prose

2.6 Unit Summary

2.7 Key Terms

2.8 Check Your Progress

2.0 Introduction T.S. Eliot has been a name of high fame in English poetry since the early twenties. He had governed the age in which he lived with an unchallengeable authority. The 20th century, as it is known to all, is quite complex and diversified in nature. It cannot be signalized by a single voice or authority. Still T.S. Eliot may be regarded as its best representative in English literature, perhaps more so than any other literary figure. Amongst the post-war poets, playwrights and critics, who have enjoyed honor and prestige, Eliot stands out as a towering personality. It is he alone who could face and relish the life of stark and harsh realities. He never liked to sit in an ivory tower by shutting his eyes to the intricate and baffling problems confronting the human race of his time. He rather came forward as one of ourselves and to present a first-hand report on the formidable issues of the age.

2.1 Unit objective This unit intends to cover the following topics: • The Life Sketch of T.S. Eliot • A Selective Chronology of T. S. Eliot's Life • T. S. Eliot's Work

2.2 The Life Sketch of T.S. Eliot Eliot is undeniably a difficult poet, and the more irritating for this because the difficulty is often quite deliberate. But he is not inaccessible; and he would himself have considered that he had failed if his poems did not communicate a great part of their meaning to an intelligent reader unfurnished with notes and commentaries. It is important not to make difficulties for ourselves, particularly in early readings of poetry; the clever critics should be left alone, at least for a while. Take things at their face value and don't try to do too much allegorical interpreting. The second paragraph of *East Coker*, for example, is about a lane leading into a village, on a hot afternoon; and suggestions that the lane is life, and the village one's destiny seem to us grotesque and crude. Eliot knew that he was doing better than that. When he wants to be allegorical, he gives clear signposts (and avoids descriptions of this concrete immediacy). T.S. Eliot has been a name of high fame in English poetry since the early twenties. He had governed the age in which he lived with an unchallengeable authority. The 20th century, as it is known to all, is quite complex and diversified in nature. It cannot be signalized by a single voice or authority. Still T.S. Eliot may be regarded as its best representative in English literature, perhaps more so than any other literary figure. Amongst the post-war poets, playwrights and critics, who have enjoyed honor and prestige, Eliot stands out as a towering personality. It is he alone who could face and relish the life of stark and harsh realities. He never liked to sit in an ivory tower by shutting his eyes to the intricate and baffling problems confronting the human race of his time. He rather came forward as one of ourselves and to present a first-hand report on the formidable issues of the age. As a poet, Eliot drew upon many different sources to gather his material. He was deeply influenced by certain glorious personalities of the past and of the contemporary scene. Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Ben Jonson, Arnold, etc. in general, and Donne and the Metaphysicals in particular contributed their shares in shaping Eliot's mind. Of the foreign impact upon him, mention may be made of the French Symbolists, especially Laforgue and Gautier, of the German philosophers, such as Hegel, Meinong and Bradley, and of the Indian religions and philosophies. By embracing influences so wide and diverse in nature, Eliot greatly increased his knowledge and enriched his sensibility. This also accounts for his being a universal poet. Eliot was a versatile genius, a highly talented man and an immortal soul. Eliot's universality

is to be interpreted in the sense in which all great poetry, from the funeral chants of the pygmies to the *Hai-ku* of the Japanese, is the common heritage of all man; Eliot's appeal was not limited to the English speaking people or to the European tradition; he is rather a universal poet. And this necessarily presupposes that he is an English poet or an European poet. In this context it is proper to say that Eliot was aware of a vastly rich tradition, which was not merely English or European, but had a wider application. He derives, for example, not only from "the best that is known and thought" in the Bible, or Christian theology, but also from Buddhism and Hinduism and many more religions. It is in this sense that Eliot's outlook is said to be catholic, not insular, not national, but international, nor peculiar to one tribe or people but to all tribes and peoples. For him creeds and castes do not matter; he is only concerned with the best. This also explains another stand taken by him, that of a classicist in literature. He held Aristotle's authority supreme, because he had a critical mind par excellence. Eliot is also a critic of the Aristotelian line. Correlated to this is his historic statement in 1928 that he was '

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an Anglo – Catholic in religion' and 'a royalist in politics'.

No doubt, Eliot's mind was wholly absorbed with Christianity, its burning problems, its reformatory zeal; his poetry tends to enact an attitude towards life, and this attitude is that of a devout Christian and spiritual fighter. By 'royalist in politics' Eliot might have meant a conservative who does not believe in sudden and violent revolutions, like the one which the French enacted in 1789 against the monarchy. Eliot was a humanitarian beyond scruples, but it does not mean that he should be violent and aggressive to root out the stumbling blocks in the way. They are rather to be overcome with sympathy, which at once implies the sympathy of a critical mind. His manifesto of being a 'royalist' does not offer him an advantage of escape from the social and human responsibilities, which necessitates involving into action rather than fleeing into a solitary resort. T.S. Eliot was born in 1888 in St. Louis, Missouri (U.S.A). His family was of Devonshire origin, which was traditionally interested in trade and commerce and academic studies. He was an undergraduate at Harvard during 1906 –1909. Here he came under the influence of the Symbolists and Laforgue. During 1909-10 he was a graduate student at Harvard and completed his early poems, including 'Portrait of a Lady' and began 'Prufrock'. In the years 1910 and 1911 he went to France (Sorbonne in Paris) and Germany. He spent a year at Oxford reading Greek

philosophy. Again he was back to Harvard University as a graduate student. It is then that he started work on the philosophy of Francis Herbert Bradley, whose Appearance and Reality influenced him much. During 1914 –15 he resumed his study in Germany which was cut off by the First World War. He took his residence at Oxford, and worked on some short satirical poems. 'Prufrock' was published in Chicago in June 1915. His marriage to Vivian Haigh - Wood took place in July 1915. After a brief experience of teaching at Highgate School, Eliot entered business in 1916. He also completed his Bradley thesis in that year. Then he spent eight years as an employee of Lloyd's Bank. He took up various reviewing and editorial assignments. During 1917-20 he wrote many poems in quatrains after the French fashion. 'Gerontion' deserves special mention in this connection. 'Prufrock' and Other Observations appeared in press in June 1917. He was an assistant editor of The Egoist (1917-19). He also published a collection of Poems and The Sacred Wood in 1920. Eliot was the London correspondent for The Deal during 1921-22 and La-Nouvelle Revue Française during 1922-23. In October 1923 began his career as an editor of 'The Criterion'. His epoch -making poem, The Waste Land, appeared in public in 1922. It is a much-discussed poem with five movements. In it the poet has displayed the fears, doubts and distrust of the post war generation. It won him the Dial award. In 1925 appeared his Poems 1909-1925, which included 'The Hollow Men' written in the spirit of The Waste land. During 1926-27 came out his satiric pieces 'Fragment of a Prologue', and 'Fragment of an Agon'. In 1927 Eliot declared himself to be an Anglo-Catholic in religion and assumed British citizenship. 'Ariel Poems' were published between 1927 and 1930. 'Ash Wednesday', the most difficult poem in six sections, appeared in 1930, before which he had written an essay on Dante (1929). The fragmentary 'Coriolan' was out in 1931. The year 1932 saw the publication of Selected Essays in which were included most of the essays already published in The Sacred Wood' (1920). Thereafter

The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism (1933) and After Strange Gods (1934)

were produced which contain some of the highly qualified critical opinions of the poet critic on the theory and practice of poetry.

The year 1934 witnessed a substantial change in the attitude of the poet. He had now sided with the poetic drama, which he renovated and energized during the later years of his life. Eliot's first work in this direction was The Rock (1934). Since then a spate of publications flooded the dramatic field. Murder in the Cathedral appeared in 1935. Poems: 1909-1935, including 'Burnt Norton' was produced then. The Family Reunion in 1939 was a stage- failure, but the dramatist remains unshaken. During the years 1940-42 appeared 'East Coker', 'The Dry Salvages' and 'Little Gidding'. These three and 'Burnt Norton' were combined together to form Four Quartets (1943). The year 1947 brought a catastrophe for Eliot : the death of his first wife after a long illness. In 1948 he wrote 'Notes towards the Definition of Culture. By now he had been honored by his fellow poets, writers, literary associations and clubs on so many occasions. Among the many literary honors bestowed upon him, mention may be made of : Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry at Harvard (1932-33), President, Classical Association, Nobel Prize for Literature (1948), and Order of Merit (1948). At different times he had received honorary degrees from no less than twelve Universities in Europe and America. Eliot wrote The Cocktail Party in 1950, The Confidential Clerk in 1955 and The Elder Statesman in 1959. After 'Four Quartets', poetry was almost untouched by him, though the poetic element was indisputably retained in all his dramas mentioned above. Earlier in 1957, Eliot had married Valerie Fletcher, his second wife, and had published On Poetry and Poets. Eliot's hectic literary life came to an end on January 4, 1965, and the news of his death was received in the world with a sense of deep loss and sorrow. Needless to say that with the passing away of T.S. Eliot, an age of Masters of English literature has closed its chapter, at least for the time being. But he will ever be remembered by us; he who gave us 'Whispers of Immortality' while alive, will return invisibly to us to console, exhort, and guide the 'erring humanity'. He would be ever remembered as one of the illustrious sons of the Muse who have secured a permanent place on the Parnassus. He is to be remembered as one who has enriched and enhanced the scope of English poetry. "He has given it (English poetry) a new intellectual dignity, new forms arising out of a new sincerity and a new spiritual depth. Like Dryden after the Restoration and Wordsworth at the end of the eighteenth century he has also given it a new policy. More than any other poet he has saved it

'from becoming a mere pastime of the scholarly section of the upper middle class, like Latin poetry in the days of Claudian and Ausonius.' 2.3 A Brief Life Sketch

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of T.S. Eliot T. S. Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri

in 1888. After a Harvard degree he came to Europe to complete his studies and because of the war, stayed in England, where he did low-paid work as a teacher and bank-clerk, while writing reviews of startling originality. Like many other young artists, he was helped and influenced at this time by Ezra Pound, on whose advice he is said to have cut his most famous poem, *The Waste Land* (1922) by about half. In his youth Eliot was understandably regarded as a rebel, because his new ideas were radical; but he was always of a sober nature, and with his conversion to Anglo Catholicism in 1927 and his Professorship of poetry at Harvard in 1932, he became a highly respectable and respected figure, giving talks on religion and culture and, as a director of 'Faber and Faber', doing much a number of verse plays. He died in 1965. His reaction against romanticism: When Eliot began publishing poetry, Victorian Romanticism was at its last gasp, in the chatty, matter of fact, but basically sentimental poems of the 'Georgians', of whom Rupert Brooke was the most popular. Eliot, both by personal inclination and for what he sensed to be the needs of time, reacted sharply against nineteenth century English poetry and its criticism. In his reviewing he asserted the excellence of half-forgotten sixteenth and seventeenth century writers, and in his poetry, made brainwork and a sense of wit again important. Irony is probably the most pervasive characteristic of his early London poems:

not only the ironic wit of the seventeenth century Metaphysicals, but also a modern impudent, allusive irony derived from the French symbolists, Jules Laforgue and from Ezra Pound. Eliot's later Poetry: Later, Eliot's poetry becomes more earnest and broadly philosophical, though *The Waste Land*, certainly a philosophical comment on twentieth-century society, is still wickedly infested with literary sick jokes and embellished with exaggeratedly learned notes. The spirit of *The Waste Land* seems pessimistic, but its message is one of exhortation to better things, and *Ash Wednesday* (1930) and *Four Quartets* (1944) are poems firmly based in Christian faith, though always of a somber kind. (Eliot is never exuberant.) *Four Quartets*, arguably Eliot's finest work, is easier to understand than the earlier poems; the literary allusions have almost disappeared and there is no deliberate cultivation of obscurity.

2.4 A Selective Chronology of T. S. Eliot's Life

- Ancestry • 1670 Andrew Eliot leaves East Coker, Somerset, to settle in Massachusetts • 1834 Reverend William Greenleaf Eliot (Eliot's grandfather) leaves Massachusetts to settle in St. Louis, Missouri
- Early Years (1888-1914) • 1888 Born September 26, St. Louis, Missouri
- 1896 Eliot's father, Henry Ware Eliot, builds summer house in Gloucester, Massachusetts • 1897 Composes first poem (four verses) about the sadness of having to start school again every Monday morning; attends Smith Academy, St. Louis, until 1905 • 1905 Earliest poetry published in *Smith Academy Record* • 1906-1910 Harvard University (studies comparative literature and Western philosophy) Early poetry appears in the *Harvard Advocate*, which Eliot edited • 1910-1911 Visits Paris; studies French literature and philosophy at the Sorbonne Attends Henri Bergson's weekly lectures at the College de France; visits London, Munich "Prufrock" completed • 1911-1914 Attends Harvard Graduate School (studies Sanskrit and Indic philosophy) • 1914 Travels to Europe; studies at University of Marburg; settles in London; meets Ezra Pound
- World War I begins
- Middle Years (1915-1944) • 1915 "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" published in Chicago (June) Becomes resident of London Marries Vivienne Haigh-Wood (June 26) • 1916 Teaches at Highgate Junior School for four terms Lectures on Modern French and English Literature, extension courses at Oxford and London Universities Completes dissertation on F. H. Bradley • 1917 Joins the Colonial and Foreign Department of Lloyds Bank Prufrock and Other Observations published in London Assistant editor of *The Egoist* (until 1919) • 1918 World War I ends • 1919 Eliot's father dies (January) "Gerontion" published in London (August) • 1920 *The Sacred Wood* Selected Poems published in London • 1921 Suffers from nervous breakdown • 1922 London correspondent for *The Dial* *The Waste Land* published in London (October) in *The Criterion* (edited by Eliot until 1939) Eliot wins Dial Award for *The Waste Land* • 1925 Joins Board of Directors of Faber and Gwyer Publishers (later Faber & Faber) Poems 1909-1925 published in London and New York • 1926 Gives the Clark Lectures at Cambridge • 1927 Baptized into Church of England (June 29) Becomes a naturalized British citizen (November) "Journey of the Magi" published in London (August) • 1928 Lancelot Andrewes • 1929 Eliot's mother (Charlotte Champe Eliot) dies • 1930 *Ash-Wednesday* published in London and New York • 1931 *Thoughts after Lambeth* • 1932-1933 Visits America for the first time since 1914 Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry at Harvard; lectures

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published as *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*

Selected Essays, 1917-1932, including most of The Sacred Wood. • 1933 Legal separation from Vivienne • 1934 Visits Burnt Norton After Strange Gods and The Rock: A Pageant Play • 1935 Murder in the Cathedral • 1936 Collected Poems 1909-1935 Burnt Norton published in London (as final poem in Collected Poems) Visits the Medieval Church at Little Gidding • 1937 Visits East Coker • 1939 World War II begins; Vivienne suffers final breakdown The Idea of a Christian Society The Family Reunion Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats • 1940 East Coker published in London • 1941 The Dry Salvages published in London • 1942 Little Gidding published in London • 1943 Four Quartets published in New York (1944 in London) later Years (1945-1965) • 1945 World War II ends • 1947 Vivienne dies Receives honorary degree from Harvard • 1948 Awarded Nobel Prize for Literature Order of Merit from King George VI Notes towards the Definition of Culture • 1949 The Cocktail Party • 1953 The Confidential Clerk • 1957 Marries Valerie Fletcher (January 10) On Poetry and Poets • 1958 The Elder Statesman • 1963 Visits New York with Valerie Collected Poems 1909-1962 published in London and New York • 1964

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Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F. H. Bradley • 1965

Dies January 4, London Ashes interred in St. Michael's parish church at East Coker • 1969 Complete Poems and Plays published in London and New York 2.5

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T. S. Eliot's Work T. S. Eliot's literary production spreads over 45 years. He wrote poems, plays, literary and social essays

during this long period. He worked as a journalist and editor. His writings may be divided under three heads i.e. poetry, drama and prose. 2.5.1 T.S. Eliot's Poetry T.S. Eliot's poetic career has been divided into five phases periods: i. The First period: Eliot's Juvenalia 1905-1909. The poems of this period are immature and mere school-boy exercises. These poems still show signs of poetic talent. They were published in the various college and school magazines named the Smith Academy Record and the Harvard Advocate. ii. The Second Period: "Prufrock and other observations, 1917." The most significant poems of this phase are as follows: 1.

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The Love-Song of J. Alfred Prufrock 2. Portrait of a Lady 3. The Preludes 4. Rhapsody on a Windy Night 5. The "Boston Evening Transcript" 6. Mr. Apollinax iii. The Third Period: (1918-1925). The most important poems of this period are as follows: 1. Gerontion 2. Burbank with a Baedekar 3. Sweeney Erect 4. A Cooking Egg 5. Sweeney among the Nightingales 6. The Waste Land, (1922) 7. The Hollow Men, (1925) iv. The Fourth Period: (1925-1935). It is called the period of Eliot's Christian Poetry. The following are the significant poems of this Christian period: 1. Ash Wednesday, 1930 2. Journey of the Magi 3. Animalia 4. Marina 5. Choruses from "The Rock" 6. Coriolan 7. A number of minor and unfinished poems

v. The Fifth Period: This period of Eliot's religious poetry is distinguished with the previous Christian poetry. It is

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the period of Four Quartets which were published as follows: 1. Burnt Norton, 1936 2. East Coker, 1940 3. The Dry Salvages, 1941 4. Little

Gidding, 1942 2.5.2 Drama Eliot endeavored to revive English poetic drama. His poetic dramas are as follows: 1.

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The Rock, a Pageant Play, 1934 2. Murder in the Cathedral, 1935 3. The Family Reunion, 1939 4. The Cocktail Party, 1950 5. The Confidential Clerk, 1954 6. The Elder Statesman, 1959 2.5.3

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Prose Eliot's prose was published in the form of articles and essays in

the various periodicals and journals of the day. The following are the literary essays which are highly admired because of his critical pronouncements: 1.

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The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, 1933 2. The idea of the Christian Society, 1939 3. Notes towards a Definition of Culture, 1948 4. Selected Essays, Third Edition, 1951 5. On Poetry and Poets, 1957 6. To Criticize the Critic, 1965 7. Tradition and Individual Talent 8. Poetry and Drama 9. The Function of Criticism 10. The English Metaphysical Poets 11. The Frontiers of Criticism, etc

Eliot was a renowned editor of the magazine named the Criterion which was in circulation from 1922-1939. This magazine was closed because of the outbreak of war in Europe. Above all, Eliot is accessible (like many great poets) through his verse. Some of us were brought up on his Practical Cat poems, or a little later, perhaps, on 'Sweeney Agonistes', in which conventional popular verse-forms are handled with the utmost skill. Prufrock is haunting and disturbing in its incantations (listen if possible to Eliot's reading of it on record); the epigrams of Whispers of Immortality have become popular quotations. Throughout his work the craftsmanship and lucidity of the verse compel us to close attention and can be a guide to our understanding.

2.6 Unit Summary Thomas Stearns Eliot (26 Sept. 1888-4 Jan. 1965) was born in St. Louis, Missouri, the son of Henry Ware Eliot, president of the Hydraulic-Press Brick Company, and Charlotte Champe Stearns, a former teacher, and an energetic social worker. Eliot was the youngest of seven children, born when his parents were prosperous and secure in their mid-forties. Afflicted with a congenital double hernia, he was in the constant care of his mother and five elder sisters. His paternal grandfather founded the Unitarian church in St. Louis and soon became a pillar of the then southwestern city's religious and civic life. Eliot knew both the city's muddy streets and its exclusive drawing rooms. He attended Smith Academy in St. Louis until he was sixteen. In 1905 he departed for a year at Milton Academy outside of Boston, a preparatory to follow his elder brother Henry to Harvard.

2.7 Key Terms Incantation: special words that have a magic effect when spoken, sung or chanted; the act of speaking, singing or chanting these words. Exhortation: to incite by argument or advice; urge strongly exhorting voters to do the right thing. intransitive verb. To give warnings or advice; make urgent appeals.

2.8 Check Your Progress 1) Give a life-sketch of T.S.Eliot. 2) Prepare a brief sketch of T.S. Eliot. 3) Discuss the T.S.Eliot's Work under the following headings: T.S. Eliot's Poetry Drama Prose

Unit 3: Formative Influences on T.S. Eliot 3.0 Introduction 3.1 Unit Objective 3.2 3.2 Influences on T.S. Eliot 3.2.1 Formative Influences on T.S. Eliot 3.2.2 Impact of Landscape and City Life on Eliot's Mind 3.2.3 T. S. Eliot: The Role of University and Scholars 3.3 T. S. Eliot's Mind and Art in English literature 3.4 Unit Summary 3.5 Key Terms 3.6 Check Your Progress 3.0 Introduction T. S. Eliot is a British as well as an American poet. He can truly be called as —The Renaissance Man of the 20th Century He was more schooled than any other literary figure of his time. His studies in Classical literature cannot be matched by any other writer of his time. Though, it was a modern age, yet we find that Eliot is standing class apart from his generation encompassing all the ages- right from Chaucer till Pound and others. He is a perfect example of —"The Renaissance Man of the 20th Century", bringing to the fore the conflict in the psyche of the "modern man" caused because of his trap in the world of old and the new ideas. His erudition hardly leaves any stage of the literary development that it does not bring under its scanner. And similar to the "Renaissance man", he is trapped in the middle of the old and the new worlds- the medieval and the modern. His conditions often land him into a "metaphysical" state. He is torn apart at the miserable conditions of the modern man; depicts "him" in the true light like none before or ever after him, and even finds out the solution to the tragic human existence in his later works such as "Four Quartets". He is indeed a true man of his times. Like, he himself vacillates between the two great nations and the conflicting worlds of science, religion and philosophy, his celebrated character "Prufrock" too vacillates between his "two selves" entangled between the two opposing and conflicting forces before finally surrendering in favor of his "Doppelgänger". It would be improper to discuss "Prufrock" without a look at the formative influences on the life of T S Eliot.

3.1 Unit Objective This units intends to inform the learners on: • Influences on T.S.Eliot - Formative Influences on T.S.Eliot - Impact of Landscape and City Life on Eliot's Mind - T. S. Eliot: The Role of University and Scholars • Eliot's Mind and Art in English literature 3.2 Influences on T.S.Eliot We can learn about the influences on T.S.Eliot categorizing them as: 3.2.1 Formative Influences on

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T.S.Eliot Thomas Stearns Eliot was born on 26 September 1888 in St Louis, Missouri. His

first ancestor came from East Coker in England and was a Calvinist. Eliot's grandfather William Greenleaf Eliot was a Harvard graduate and a Unitarian minister, who later on moved to St. Louis from Boston. Apart from being a leading philanthropist, he was also a financial genius. Thomas Stearns Eliot was born of Henry Ware Eliot and Charlotte Champe Stearns. He was their seventh child. His family background played a vital role in the growth of his nerves and cerebral cortex. He later asserted that

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the primary channel of transmission of culture is the family: no man wholly escapes from the kind, or wholly surpasses the degree, of culture which he acquired from his early environment'.

The dominant influence during his childhood was that of his grandfather. Although, he (W. G. Eliot) had passed away the year before Eliot was born; however, his influence cannot be overlooked. Eliot's later conservatism too was a product of this influence. His grandfather believed that religion and law are the great conservative influences of society and that all great social changes, to be beneficial, must be slow. Eliot acknowledged that

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T S Eliot's theory of impersonality A study of ... (D35738531)

the standard of conduct was that which my grandfather had set; our moral judgments, our decisions between duty and self-indulgence, were taken as if, like Moses he had brought down the tables of law, any deviation from which would be sinful'.

By this, he emphasized the law of public service operating in three areas: the Church, the city and the University. The deep interest of the family code upon the sensibility of the child can be glimpsed in the seven-year-old Eliot's conclusion to his brief

biography of George Washington: And then he died, of course. He was never told to tell a lie. He died at Mount Vernon'. Eliot's father did not follow his father's footsteps to become a minister. He instead became a successful businessman despite the fact that he had artistic ambitions. When Henry Eliot died in January 1919, the son wrote with regret of his father's youthful possibilities that never came to anything, and with affection and admiration of his old fashioned scholarship, his flute playing, his drawing, and especially his sketches of cats'. Eliot's mother Charlotte too like his father, was a thwarted artist. Her profound, complex and everlasting influence on her son cannot be denied or overlooked. Unfortunately, she could not go to university and had to take up school teaching as a career till her marriage, even before she was nineteen. However, she possessed an unusual brilliancy and had a strong sense of social responsibility throughout her life. She dedicated the memoir of her father-in-law "Lest They Forget" to her children. Her didactic poems are colored with religious sermons. Her temperament towards moral, social and religious order is reflected through the mature poems of her son which show an unparalleled influence of a mother in the formation of the sensibilities of her son. Eliot however, did not share her faith in the individual's visionary power. Charlotte did not get the recognition she had striven for, and was assiduous in nurturing her son's talent, hoping that he would redeem her sense of failure. 3.2.2 Impact of Landscape and City Life on Eliot's Mind As has already been mentioned, Eliot grew up in St, Louis. We find the imprints of St Louis in his literary imagination, sense and sensibility. Quoting Eliot from "The Eliot Family and St Louis" Moody has written, "as I spent the first sixteen years of my life in St. Louis,

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it is evident that St Louis affected me more deeply than any other environment has done'.

During this time, we found that St Louis was expanding and prosperous. However, at the end of the century, it was plagued by financial and political scandals. So, "it had become shabby to a degree approaching slumminess", he later reminisced. Hence, the urban imagery depicted in "Prufrock", is reminiscent of "St Louis". This is further supported by no other than the poet himself, "so it was that for nine months of the year my scenery was almost exclusively urban, and a good deal of it seedily, drably urban at that. My urban imagery was that of St Louis, upon which that of Paris and London have been superimposed".

But still, he was, "very well satisfied with having been born in St Louis", and in fact thought he was fortunate to have been born there rather than in Boston or New York or London'. The knowledge of the prehistoric past was one of the important factors that influenced the course of Eliot's poetry. Missouri and Mississippi had a lasting imprint on him. He later reminisced as written by Moody in The Eliot Family and St Louis, "

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there is something in having passed one's childhood beside the big river, which is incommunicable to those who have not'.

St Louis was adjacent to Forest Park. Near the center of the Forest park, "about twelve miles from St Louis could be found a series of prehistoric mounds'. It is conjectured that these mark "the beginning of Eliot's lifelong preoccupation with the complex relationship of the prehistoric past and the present, and with the problematic concept of the primitive". It is exclusively reflected in the tension/pull in the character of Prufrock. In contrast to his urban imagery of St Louis, the country landscape influencing him is that of the New England coast where his family spent the summers. "Eliot's favorite author during his childhood and adolescence was Mayne Read, one of the most popular American children's writers of the day who wrote about the Wild West, blood curdling adventures at sea, and 'savages' in remote parts of the globe'. He admits that the only happiness that he derived in life was during his childhood and his second marriage. However, we find that disapproval of some of the authors like Byron, Shelly, Omar Khayyam, Swinburne and Rossetti etc. during his childhood added only to the pleasure of reading them at a later stage. 3.2.3 T. S. Eliot: The Role of University and Scholars Eliot was brought up in a Unitarian environment. Unitarians believe in the oneness of God and reject the doctrine of trinity. Eliot's family occupied a prominent position among the Unitarians and was known by the name of Boston Brahmins. "They were a paradoxical combination of theological liberalism and social conservatism, possessing an optimistic faith in reform, yet fearing change'. The poet however, revolted against it when he entered Harvard in the year 1906; it is this paradox that forms an integral part of the personality of "Prufrock'. Harvard too played a vital role in the growth and personality of the poet. It followed then, an elective system of education. Although the elective system gave Eliot the opportunity to study a wide range of subjects, Eliot was, however, against it owing to its liberalism.

It was at Harvard that he came in contact with Irving Babbitt and George Santayana. He even took a course in France on the former's advice. Santayana was hostile to Unitarianism and we see that at later stages in life, Eliot too became critical of the sect. Both these great teachers i.e. Babbitt and Santayana preached classicism as opposed to romanticism. Babbitt was well read in Sanskrit, Pali and Indian Philosophy. He hated the ideas of 'flux' and 'pragmatism', propagated by William James and Bergson. Babbitt believed that the classical spirit of the humanist serves as a guide to the same goal as religion, i.e. oneness with the world. However, Eliot later on disagreed with Babbitt on the issue, for he could not concede that humanism can serve as an alternative to, or be a substitute for religion. But still, we find a common ground of thought where he plays with Babbitt. It is mainly his reflection of mediating between the past and present, and opposition between classicism and romanticism. It is this arrangement and rearrangement of sensibility in the formative phases of Eliot's career which eventually finds its imprint of dichotomy in the character of "Prufrock". The twentieth century poetry for Eliot was without much substance. So, he turned to nineteenth century poets for inspiration. Thomson's "The City of Dreadful Night", with its urban settings and a sense of horror, had an impressive impact on the setting of "Prufrock'. Davidson is another poet whose persona in "Thirty Bob a Week', is a trapped city clerk circumscribed by the tentacles of modernity resembling "Prufrock'; and finally, it is Baudilaire, who taught Eliot the art of depicting the violence and horror of a modern city life. From him, Eliot learnt first "a precedent for poetical possibilities, never developed by any poet writing in my own language, of the more sordid aspects of modern metropolis, of the possibility of fusion between the sordidly realistic and phantasmagoric,

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the possibility of the juxtaposition of the matter of fact and the fantastic'.

Another notable influence on Eliot was that of Arthur Symonds whose 'The Symbolist movement in Literature' had a powerful impact on him, probably teaching him that great cities possess a kind of 'double consciousness.' Above all, it was Dante who exercised 'the most persistent and deepest influence' upon Eliot's verse. There are many lines that he borrowed from the writings of Dante and he admits that he borrowed 'in an attempt to arouse in the reader's mind the memory of some Dantesque scene, and thus establish a relationship between the medieval inferno and modern life'. Next among the influences on the psyche of the poet comes Paris. It was here that he came in contact with the novelist Alain-Fournier with whom he practiced French; and Jean Verdenal-a medical student, to whom he dedicated *Prufrock* and *Other Observations*.

The influence of Bergson on Eliot came in direct contrast with the ideas and Action Francaise of Charles Maurras. Maurras and Bergson are contradictory in the sense that Maurras believed in order, reason, hierarchy and discipline whereas Bergson favored intuitive knowledge, impulse and the theories of flux and change. Maurras condemned Rousseau and held him responsible for the malaise of the contemporary problems of the western society. For Maurras, 'there could be no beauty without order, no order without a hierarchy of values, no hierarchy without authority both to define and to endorse it'. However, at this point we find that differences between Babbitt and Maurras are increasing and the former has labeled some of the parts of 'L'Avenir de l'intelligence' as 'romantic antiromanticism'. Babbitt even deplored that while defending classicism, Maurras had mesmerized everything right from the romantic art, spreading over to political and religious questions. However, we find Eliot to be a staunch supporter of Maurras and he was taken aback when Action Francaise was condemned by the Vatican in 1926 'for putting religion at the service of a political movement'. But it is also true that Eliot later on justified the action of the Pope in the sense that the pope was condemning a kind of heresy that advocated only one form of government i.e. monarchical- compatible only with Catholicism. Eliot now started distancing himself from Maurras, and 'in a letter of 13 August 1954, he furiously rebuffed Pound, saying he would tolerate no further insult either to his nationality or to his religion, which included the Jewish religion' as cited in. Eliot enrolled himself as philosophy student at Harvard in 1911, and the period of 1880s up to the First World War is known as 'the golden age of American Philosophy'. The Harvard School of philosophy was known as the best philosophy school in the world. It was influenced by luminaries such as Josiah Royce, Babbitt, Santayana and William James. Their main concern at the time was to defend religious beliefs and tradition against the onslaught of Darwinism and new scientific materialism. Hence arose, the need for integration and synthesis of science and religion. In fact, it is religion that gives breathing space to the modern man laid down with the burden of 'demands of life.' Wherever we find the absence of faith, belief and the deviation from scriptures, we notice that the environment becomes tragic. Individual alienation, solitariness, marital discord, litigation, indiscipline, inefficiency, jealousy and materialism etc. overtake the individual and make him a tragic 'Zero' as he wastes his life in useless pursuits thrust upon him by self-created economic necessities dominated by his 'Doppelgänger'. It is only religion that can save mankind from the devilish nuisances of modern life which are generated in the name of individualism and democracy. The strong influence of these nuisances cannot be ignored in the case of 'Prufrock'. Maybe, Eliot's sensibility was through a molding process during these years; however, we do find Eliot a far more mature 'prophet' in the later phase of his poetic development, as 'Four Quartets' is his fabulous gift to mankind. 'Prufrock' and 'WasteLand' show us the glimpses of the absurdity of modern life whereas his 'Four Quartets' and other religious poems re-write about its salvation. Another notable influence on Eliot was that of Josiah Royce whom he termed as 'the doyen of American Philosophers'. Josiah talked about an absolute soul that achieves the synthesis between the finite and the infinite. Perhaps, this is what Eliot means when his 'Prufrock' intends 'to squeeze the universe in a ball'. William James' pragmatism and his core idea that 'truth is what works', was also questioned by Eliot for having made man the Center of all things. However, he was indebted to him for the impact of modern psychical truths on the mysticism and pathological states of mind, which abundantly echo and re-echo in *Prufrock*. The hallucinatory nature of the persona of 'Prufrock' seems to have a direct James' impact on - his personality. However, we find that Eliot clearly demarcated between the morbid states of mind and genuine mysticism in his later poetry. He propagated the divorce of theology from philosophy. During the writing of *Waste Land*, he admits how he had almost turned into a Buddhist. Hinduism too had a great influence on the mind of the poet. It is a well-known fact that he was well versed in the classics and was familiar with *Bhagwat Gita* and *Patanjali*. His celebrated poem 'Waste Land' is summed up with 'Shantiah'- which is a Sanskrit word propagating 'peace'. He even criticized the misinterpretations of Indian philosophy by western thinkers and admitted that 'to understand Indian Philosophy he would have had to forget how to think and feel as an American or a European, which for practical and sentimental reasons he did not wish to do'. Eliot wrote his dissertation on F. H. Bradley. Bradley believed in the necessity of immediate experience. It is only after the immediate experience that thought and reflection, and ego and self are generated. So, according to him 'absolute' is an all-inclusive system containing all experience. Eliot upheld Bradley's theory of truth and reality and saw separation as a very thin line. He even admitted that the difference between sanity and insanity is that of a degree and what seems insane to the ordinary may be an apprehension of a reality which is not understood by the same. After

completing his studies at Harvard, Eliot came to London in 1914. It was here that he had shown 'Prufrock' to Pound on whose suggestion and mediation it was sent to Monroe - the editor of 'Poetry'. In June 1915, he married Vivien Haigh-Wood. She was flirtatious, impulsive, hysteric and neurotic, and chronically ill on occasions. Eliot could not devote full time to his writings at this stage. However, she did not let Eliot go to the US from England and he is thankful to her for this as he admits, "had he done so, he felt, he might never have written another line of poetry".

3.3 T. S. Eliot's Mind and Art in English literature

The critics have found a lucid and logical development or evolution of T.S. Eliot's genius from the beginning to the last stage of his career. He was a dynamic personality who was changing constantly and harmoniously. Broadly speaking, his poetry may be divided into two phases. The first phase lasts upto 1925. It includes such poems as The Long Song of Prufrock, Gerontion, The Waste Land and The Hollow Men. The later phase contains poems like Ash Wednesday and The Four Quartets. The first phase leads to the second one, without any break or cleavage between the two. So, there is a natural and harmonious development of T.S. Eliot's poetry. The themes of the early phase of Eliot's poetry: Eliot's themes are usually urban in the early phase of his poetry. The tone is satirical and ironic. He studies sophisticated city-people and their habits and manners. There is tremendous influence of Laforgue and the other French Symbolists on the early phase. He learnt from Baudlaire how a big city has a torturing impact on the soul on the individual. Eliot is par-excellent in depicting this impact on the soul of the individual. He showed the profound world panorama of futility and anarchy of the modern civilization in The Waste Land. He presented in complete nakedness the contemporary disease and decomposition, exhaustion and boredom, selfishness and dishonesty, discord and disharmony. As stated by Elizabeth Drew: "There is the impact on the senses of all the ugliness and squalor of the common urban scene; the sights of the broken blinds and chimney pots, of vacant lots with their grimy scraps of newspapers etc. Above all there are smells, of steak in passageways, of stale beer, of cocktails and cigarettes, of dusty paper flowers, of females in shuttered rooms."

The themes of the later phase: The poet adopted the Anglo-Catholic Church in 1927. After this date, his poetry reflected his religious bent of mind. This change is discernible in The Hollow Men. These hollowmen show spiritual emptiness and barrenness. He was striving to achieve spiritual rebirth. Hence, the poems of this period reflect Eliot's spiritual awareness. Ash Wednesday is based upon the Christian theme which indicates the difficulty of achieving faith. The poet handled theological ideas in a compressed and allusive manner. The theme of Quartets is full of religious dogmas. It is a highly philosophical poem. It depicts man's place in the scheme of things. It portrays man's salvation with the supernatural and the divine. The religious bias runs through all his poetry from the beginning to the end. It is the connecting link between the earlier and the later phase. In the early poetry, his approach is negative but in the later phase, it is positive. In the two early poems Hippopotamus and Mr. In Eliot's Sunday Morning Service he finds the degeneracy of the Christian faith and the furthermore he satirizes it. In The Waste Land he depicts the spiritual sterility and decay of contemporary Western civilization. As a remedy for all its ails, he upholds the message of Lord Buddha and the 'Upanishads'. Gerontion reveals Western civilization's spiritual barrenness and its decay. Sweeney is a human beast who has no spiritual consciousness. Spiritual and moral values are constantly revealed by the poet but they remain in the background. In the later poems like the Four Quartets, there is more emphasis on moral values. The urban atmosphere of squalor and sordidness is relegated to the background. This poem reminds us about the London crowds of The Waste Land but basically the setting is a masterpiece of sublimity and poetic vision. Thus, The Waste Land is Eliot's Inferno, Ash Wednesday is Eliot's Purgatorio; Four Quartets is Eliot's Paradiso. Evolution in Eliot's poetic techniques: Firstly, we note a change in Eliot's style and diction. In the early phase of Eliot's poetry, he practiced condensation and compression. Up to The Waste Land Eliot's poetry is called poetic short-hand. The style is overloaded with quotations-which are taken from the outstanding writers all over Europe. Thus a reader is unable to grasp the theme of obscurity caused by the allusions and references. The later poetry sheds off this type of technique and becomes transparent. The allusions and quotations are used sparingly. The poet realizes that the aim of poetry is social. He remarks himself:

"The most useful poetry, socially, would be one which could cut across all the present stratification of public taste." In this phase, the difficulty emerges in grasping his themes due to religious and mystical bias. Secondly, T.S. Eliot shows remarkable evolution in his versification. In his earlier phase he uses the traditional iambic pentameter. The Waste Land indicates the culmination of Eliot's unparalleled skill in the handling of traditional meters. After this poem Eliot endeavors to express himself more and more in his own manner. He became a great innovator. He, as a metrist, is shaping a short line with four stresses and a strong medial pause. Thus, in some lines there are only two stresses. In other lines, there are as many as six stresses. This measure enabled him to give vent to his poetic vision properly. In Four Quartets he has achieved this measure with remarkable success. Thirdly, the early poetry is dramatic while the later one is predominantly lyrical. The characters like Prufrock, Gerontion and Tiresias of the early poetry are the pivot around whom everything moves; the poet reveals their subconscious mind which forms the nucleus of these poems. But in the later phase, the poet expresses his own feelings and sentiments. "Thus, he is poignantly lyrical. For example, Four Quartets is a masterpiece of lyrical devotional poetry in English literature." Fourthly, in the early poems like The Waste Land, poets went to the past to find parallels for the present. This technique is called mythical. The early poems are replete with the pagan myths, and legends which are borrowed from Homer down to Eliot's own age. In the later poetry, his mythical techniques are based upon Christian mythology, as for example Ash Wednesday and Four Quartets are purely religious poems which reveal Eliot's profound knowledge of the Bible. The imagery is basically Christian and the vocabulary ceaselessly echoes the Bible. Finally, Eliot's themes remain constant; only his technique changes. In the last phase, the symbols (images) are highly poetic and sublime. They are often drawn from nature. They do not reveal urban squalor and dirt. On the other hand, we have 'the rose' 'the garden', 'the fountain' and 'the yew', which are invested with symbolic significance. The last phase reveals the fresh, inspiring and life-giving atmosphere of nature.

T.S. Eliot's poetry appears to fall into two major movements or phases which almost (but not quite) coincide with his pre-Christian and Christian stages. Musically and rhythmically, the poems which make up Four Quartets are beautiful poems reminiscent of Mallarme, Baudelaire and Verlaine. The shock technique of The Waste Land has been abandoned and the poetry has reached serenity and majesty which bring T.S. Eliot's lyrical poetry to a fitting close. Four Quartets however, has a complexity and depth which are not found no readily in the earlier poems. Yet this great final flight of Eliot's lyric Muse sums up the experience of his whole career as a poet. The hesitant uneasy ritualistic loveliness of Ash Wednesday becomes the confident harmony of Four Quartets. Four Quartets aims at the impersonality of philosophical poetry. 3.4 Unit Summary Apart from parental influences, which were both religious and literary, Eliot had the good fortune of learning at the hands of great teachers like Irving Babbitt and George Santayana. They created in him a taste for comparative literature. He was also interested in Indian literature and philosophy. 3.5 Key Terms • Poetic Condensations is a different kind of translation process where interview transcripts are re-configured and written in stanza form. It facilitates storytelling and makes people's tacit insights accessible and understood more wholeheartedly • Poetic compression means increasing the pressure by choosing the best and fewest words for the lines to reach the ignition point. • Iambic pentameter: Iambic pentameter is a type of metric line used in traditional English poetry and verse drama. The term describes the rhythm, or meter, established by the words in that line; rhythm is measured in small groups of syllables called "feet". • In poetry, meter or meter is the basic rhythmic structure of a verse or lines in verse. Many traditional verse forms prescribe a specific verse meter, or a certain set of meters alternating in a particular order. The study and the actual use of meters and forms of versification are both known as prosody.

3.6 Check Your Progress 1) Discuss the Influences fell on T.S.Eliot under the following headings: a. Formative Influences on T.S.Eliot b. Impact of Landscape and City Life on Eliot's Mind c. T. S. Eliot: The Role of University and Scholars Module 2: Themes, Poetic Techniques and Features in Eliot's Poetry Unit 4: Themes in Eliot's Poetry 4.0 Introduction 4.1 Unit Objective 4.2 Style and Diction in T. S. Eliot's Poetry 4.3 Themes in Eliot's Poetry 4.3.1 Tradition, Impersonality And Decadence 4.3.2 Death-In-Life And Life-In-Death 4.3.3 In Search Of The Divine: Love And Time 4.4 Unit Summary 4.5 Key Terms 4.6 Check Your Progress 4.0 Introduction

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Like many modernist writers, Eliot wanted his poetry to express the fragile psychological state of humanity in the twentieth century. The passing of Victorian ideals and the trauma of World War I challenged cultural notions of masculine identity, causing artists to question the romantic literary ideal of a visionary-poet capable of changing the world through verse. Modernist writers wanted to capture their transformed world, which they perceived as fractured, alienated,

and denigrated. Europe lost an entire generation of young men to the horrors of the so-called Great War, causing a general crisis of masculinity as survivors struggled to find their place in a radically altered society. As for England, the aftershocks of World War I directly contributed to the dissolution of the British Empire.

Eliot saw society as paralyzed and wounded, and he imagined that culture was crumbling and dissolving. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917) demonstrates this sense of indecisive paralysis as the titular Speaker wonders whether he should eat a piece of fruit, make a radical change, or if he has the fortitude to keep living. Humanity's collectively damaged psyche prevented people from communicating with one another, an idea that Eliot explored in many works, including "A Game of Chess" (the second part of *The Waste Land*) and "The Hollow

Men." 4.1 Unit Objective This Unit intends to inform the learners on: • Style and Diction in T. S. Eliot's Poetry
 • Themes in Eliot's Poetry: - Tradition, Impersonality And Decadence - Death-In-Life And Life-In-Death - In Search Of The Divine: Love And Time 4.2 Style and Diction in T. S. Eliot's Poetry T. S. Eliot is a great craftsman with words. He was a great reformer of the English language like Wordsworth and John Donne. Eliot started writing in the beginning of the twentieth century. The English language became very poetic, very formal and very remote from the language of everyday use at this time. The language was vague and imprecise because of the influence of the romantics and other decadent followers. T.S. Eliot reformed the English language by bringing it once more into contact with everyday usage. In this manner, he tried to impart his life and energy once again. He expressed his ideal in the following words: "An easy commerce of the old and the new The common word exact without vulgarity The formal word precise but not pedantic The complete consort dancing together." The following are the main characteristics of T.S. Eliot's style and diction: Power of phrasing by means of Auditory Imagination: A poet's greatness is determined by the sort of words he uses and the manner in which he puts them together. He can achieve this greatness by the power of phrasing which is determined by auditory imagination.

Auditory imagination implies "the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious level of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back seeking the beginning and the end."

The poet was an embodiment of this type of imagination. His words are chosen both with reference to their sense and sound. As Helen Gardner remarks: "Mr. Eliot was from the first, a poet with a remarkable range of diction, and with a natural gift for the vividly memorable phrase." His gift of phrasing is appreciated by all the critics. He had the aptitude to squeeze words till they yielded their full juice of meaning. He was fully alive to the potentialities of words as well as to their associations in various contexts. Eliot's classical style: T.S. Eliot was a conscious and painstaking artist. He would revise and re-revise and polish and re-polish what he attempted. In this manner, he acquired precision and exactness. Thus his ideals were based upon classical dogmas. He followed the foot-steps of Horace and Virgil who used to revise their verses constantly. In this manner, he imparted new life, new form and new color to the words which he used. He achieved perfect order of speech. Thus, he has been appreciated immensely because of these ideals of art. Eliot's variety of diction: Eliot mixes unexpected and common-place phrases and words which immediately startle and surprise the reader. His colloquial beginnings are very effective. He immediately arrests the attention of the reader. For example, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* has a direct, straight-forward and colloquial opening. He immediately plunges into the topic by saying, "Let us go then, you and I." Similarly, in *Gerontion*, he is straight-forward and conversational throughout. In *The Waste Land* the style is very straight-forward as the poet uses the phrase 'Unreal City' in the beginning of the passage. His variety of diction can be noted by the use of phrases and images taken from the sordid realities of every-day urban life. Sometimes, he uses non-poetic words and phrases which were not used in poetry before. It is not easy to assimilate the diction of everyday speech but Eliot uses this technique successfully. He has acquired that variety of diction, that union of the poetic and the prosaic, of the common world and the formal, the colloquial and the remote, the precise and the

suggestive which is the achievement of a great order. There is a dramatic element in T.S. Eliot's style. He achieved this dramatic art because of the immense range and variety of diction. He uses the words and phrases according to the characters and the status of the speaker. Sometimes, he varies his style with parody. A Game of Chess opens with a direct parody of a famous passage in Antony and Cleopatra. Economy and preciseness of Eliot's style: His use of language is characterized by economy, precision, variety, and appropriateness. He would not use two epithets where only one can serve his purpose. His use of concrete, vivid and pictorial words, his power of selecting the right and the precise word, the handling of pronoun, adjectives and the various tenses of a verb, the conversational tone, 'a return to common speech,' are some of the distinctive features of his poetic diction. Eliot also has the knack of making powerful effects by the repeated use of a single word, such as, "Thinking, thinking, thinking, nothing, nothing, burning" in the third section. The absence of fertility and peace is indicated by the repeated use of the negative "no" in the opening section of The Waste Land: "

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And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief, And dry tones no sound of water."

Living Language: Language changes with time and age. The language proper for an industrial and scientific society must differ radically from the past. Eliot makes use of the language and idiom of the modern age. His imagery is derived both from the living scene and its parallel or echo of the past. Another peculiarity of T.S. Eliot is his effort to use the potent word. A word is like a juicy fruit. In order to get the utmost out of the word, we must extract and squeeze the full juice of the word with its nuances of meaning. It is this device which makes Eliot's poetry difficult to understand. Change in Technique: Eliot reacted against the traditional rhyme-scheme, particularly the iambic measure, because he wanted to make it flexible enough to explain the complexities of the modern mind and the conflict of ideas. He, therefore, prefers the use of free verse which can give him both freedom and flexibility according to his thought-content. He alternates formal rhythm with speech rhythm in order to make it life-like and modern. The flexibility of words can be noticed particularly in The Waste Land where the variations in rhythm echo the transition from one mood or emotion to the other. The experiment with the free-verse marks the renovation of the technique which is one of the strong points of Eliot's poetry. 4.3 Themes in Eliot's Poetry Eliot's subjects of talk in his poetry were: 4.3.1 Tradition, Impersonality And Decadence Eliot's poetry presents us with a most urgent and compelling struggle: the struggle to make language say what we mean it to say. In one of his later poems Eliot described his work as 'a raid on the inarticulate' (East Coker): an attempt to say what it is most difficult to say, to express oneself with a completeness of understanding. This, Eliot knew, was the same challenge which had faced every other writer of note before him and as poet and critic he assiduously assimilated himself in the work of his predecessors in order to learn from them. In all of his poetry, Eliot is conscious of precept and example, of undertaking a task that has been undertaken many times before. This is not to say that he modeled himself on previous poets. Far from it. Eliot thought of himself as having been born into an age of crisis, of the disintegration of old beliefs and old ways of life. His was a task not of perpetuating a tradition, but of recovering something lost. He did not simply imitate his masters, for he had to find new ways of saying new things. He had to be revolutionary, but only in order to effect a restoration. So, at the heart of Eliot's poetry is a contemplation of the past and of the idea of tradition. In an essay published in 1919 - 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' - Eliot considers the proper relationship between the contemporary writer and the past. Its central thesis is that literary tradition is not to be considered as something belonging to the past, dead and buried, but as a living presence with the writer. The great works of the past are to be perceived not as relics, but as having a contemporaneous existence with the writer. These works compose an order to which the new writer contributes, and in contributing to that order he also modifies its internal relations. Thus 'tradition' takes on a living force of its own. It is the writer's life-blood and the writer is both partaking of and contributing to that tradition in every work of art he produces. It follows for Eliot, then, that in his art the writer is expressing not himself, not his individually unique personality, but something of the tradition itself. In his essay Eliot defines his understanding of tradition as a

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historical sense which perceives not only the pastness of the past, but also its presence. It 'compels a

man to write not merely with his own generation in his bones, but with

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a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order'.

The new poet is significant only in his relation to past poets and in his writing he must be conscious that the new work of art he produces will alter, however slightly, the current of tradition. Hence,

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the past may be altered by the present 'as much as the present is directed by the past'.

In order to recognise and assimilate himself within the literary tradition, the poet must avoid mere self-expression. Instead, he must observe himself almost as a scientist observes a chemical reaction. The poet is a medium 'in which special, or very varied, feelings are at liberty to enter into new combinations' and in this way what the poet writes is not self-expression, but something more impersonal which seeks to express the tradition which has shaped his language and to which he now gives a new shape. '

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What happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality'.

Much of this thinking shows itself in the technical aspects of Eliot's poetry: his use of personae, or masks, such as the character of Prufrock or Gerontion to achieve an impersonality, or the use of allusions to synthesize past and present. Some of these aspects are dealt with elsewhere in this study. The thematic importance of Eliot's almost reverential perception of the English and European literary tradition lies in the attitude his poetry takes to modern civilisation. Everywhere in Eliot's poems is a sense of disgust for modern life, a conviction that civilized values have been betrayed. Eliot elevates the idea of tradition to such a commanding status because contemporary life seemed to offer him no other object of veneration. This seems true at least until the time Eliot began to look towards Christianity as a source of order and value: one might almost say that the perception of tradition was for Eliot a precursor to the perception of God. Eliot's early poetry is frequently taken up with cosmopolitan life. '

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The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', 'Portrait of a Lady', 'Preludes' and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night'

each take place in a setting of urban society. Prufrock is terrorized by women's eyes which seem to pin him against the wall, obsessed by what they will say of his receding hair, his thinness. Society as portrayed in 'Portrait of a Lady' is 'cultured' only in the most pretentious and artificial way, the Lady's

neurosis representative of a society living on its nerves. The city portrayed in the 'Preludes' is essentially the same city as that described by Prufrock with its 'one-night cheap hotels/And sawdust restaurants': the 'Preludes' gives us the 'newspapers from vacant lots' blowing in the wind, the 'sawdust-trampled street', 'a blackened street' and 'ancient women/Gathering fuel in vacant lots'. The quality of life in such a setting is meager, empty of everything except routine, offering only fear and loneliness for the girl who at night watches 'The thousand sordid image S/Of which your soul was constituted'. This is a world of deadening monotony, of crushing purposelessness. It is a world of unthinking self-gratification, of lovelessness. The woman glimpsed in 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' is probably a prostitute and the action of 'Sweeney Erect' takes place in a brothel. Sweeney is modern man, 'Broadbottomed', rising with 'Gesture of orang-outang'; modern woman is the girl in the 'Preludes' grasping 'the yellow soles of feet/In the palms of both soiled hands', or the epileptic 'clutching at her sides' in 'Sweeney Erect', or the uncomprehending Doris who 'toweled from the bath,/Enters padding on broad feet'. And so the speaker of the 'Preludes' and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' tramps the streets, aimless, lonely and fearful. Life seems random, chaotic, meaningless, the modern city a nightmarish symbol of humanity's inveterate decadence. 4.3.2 Death-In-Life And Life-In-Death In fact, life as perceived in the early poems is barely worth the name. It is not life, but existence: valueless and without purpose. Modern life in Eliot's poetry quickly becomes a living Hell, as suggested by the epigraph to 'The Love Song' or the portrayal of London in the first poem of The Waste Land entitled 'The Burial of the Dead'. At its most nightmarish, that is what modern life became to Eliot, oppressed as he was at that time by exhaustion, mental illness and personal unhappiness. The city is a burial-chamber in which ghosts wander: '

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Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled, And each man fixed his eyes before his feet' (The Waste Land). This is

not life, but death-in-life, a living death. Gerontion is a figure of death-in-life. He is an old man in a dry month ... waiting for rain'. He is 'A dull head among windy spaces', 'An old man in a draughty house/Under a windy knob' where 'Vacant shuttles/Weave the wind'. In his 'sleepy corner', he struggles to utter his 'Thoughts of a dry brain in a dry season'. The symbolism bears close affinities to that of The Waste Land (to which Eliot intended to attach 'Gerontion' as a prelude) with its stone, rubble, and deserts, its awaiting of rain. In The Hollow Men we are given figures stuffed with straw, their 'dried voices ... quiet and meaningless', gathered on the beach of a river (and awaiting its crossing, perhaps like the souls of the damned who cross the river Styx in Hades). The poem speculates about 'death's other Kingdom' and 'death's dream kingdom' in a way that suggests current life is not the opposite of death but only another territory in the kingdom of Death. Other of Eliot's poems similarly portray twentieth-century man as condemned to a living death. At the heart of his damned condition lies an inability to love and a confusion between love and the carnal gratifications of sex. Prufrock cannot write his love song and feels threatened by women, 'The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase'; there is also a shiver of revulsion at the sight of 'Arms that are braceleted and white and bare/(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair)'. The vision of womanhood at the poem's conclusion remains mystical and idealized: 'sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown'. The girl in the 'Preludes' has a soul constituted by a 'thousand sordid images' and in the morning is to be found taking the curlers from her hair. The epileptic girl in 'Sweeney Erect' is described in grossly physical terms, her mouth 'This ovalO cropped out with teeth' and her epileptic fit is portrayed in a manner ambiguously suggestive of the sexual act. Elsewhere women are to be identified as prostitutes, or else as the almost sub-human Doris, 'padding on broad feet'. Eliot's poems show a Puritan rectitude in the face of sexuality. In 'Whispers of Immortality', the figure of Grishkin has a feline seductiveness: 'Uncorseted, her friendly bust/Gives promise of pneumatic bliss', but we feel the scornful contempt in the witty conjunction of 'bliss' with the mechanical word 'pneumatic'. And in the eyes of Eliot's personae, sexual relations have indeed become mechanical. Occasionally, there is a surge of real longing: Prufrock's vision of the mermaids or the hyacinth girl in The Waste Land or in Ash-Wednesday the 'broadbacked figure drest in blue and green' who suddenly prompts the delight of 'Blown hair is sweet, brown hair over the mouth blown,Lilac and brown hair'. But it is the speaker of 'Portrait of a Lady' who represents the more characteristic attitude. He stubbornly resists the emotional demands made of him by the Lady. He is trapped in a society of artifice, with its mannered proprieties and brittle ennui. He feels himself a performer on the social stage: he must 'dance, dance/Like a dancing bear,ICry like a parrot, chatter like an ape'. Lacking the courage to express his true feelings to the Lady (and perhaps he does not truly know what

they are), the speaker is caught in a tortuous compromise, visiting the woman but remaining passively unresponsive to her. He is governed by a self-protective impulse. He keeps his countenance, he remains self-possessed: he fears a closer contact with humanity. His relations with the Lady are tepid, born out of habit rather than feeling. And this seems to be generally true of the human relationships in Eliot's poems: one sort of character (Prufrock, the speaker of 'Portrait of a Lady') timidly withdraws from relationships; another sort (Sweeney, 'the young man carbuncular' in *The Waste Land*) is incapable of forming a relationship because of the selfish obsession with the mere gratification of physical appetite. In this sort of attitude Eliot fearfully perceives a vulgarity which cripples any capacity for spiritual growth. In coming to understand life as a living death, Eliot also came to understand that to embark on a new life required a kind of death, a complete and uncaring renunciation of an old way of life. *The Hollow Men* is a poem which seems to be approaching this sort of perception. There is a yearning for the place of 'Sunlight' and singing voices, but also a fear of it, an instinct to evade it by 'deliberate disguises'. In the fragmented ending of the poem, the beginning of a prayer is blurted out, but intervening is 'the Shadow', the shadow of the Holy Spirit, perhaps, which prompts longing and fear, hope and despair. These feelings are made more explicit in 'Journey of the Magi'. Witnessing the Nativity was an occasion not of blessedness, but of perplexity: ...

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were we led all that way for Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly, We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death, But had thought they were different; this Birth was Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.

The magus does not doubt that he saw a birth, but knows that this Birth also entails a Death, the death of an old way of life in which he is 'no longer at ease'. The poem was written at a time when Eliot was preparing himself for confirmation in the Church of England and he was received into the Church in 1927. In December of that year, Section II of *Ash-Wednesday* appeared under the title 'Salutation' and Section I was published a few months later. Like 'Journey of the Magi', these poems express the advent of Christian acceptance as requiring a painful as well as joyful readjustment of attitudes. In Section II of *Ash-Wednesday*, a body has been dismembered in order to achieve a kind of purification. The first Section opens with a reference to conversion - a turning: 'Because I do not hope to turn again ...' and asserts that, in order not to turn again, the speaker must accept that thus far his life has amounted to nothing - more, he must rejoice that

he has now 'to construct something/Upon which to rejoice'. So, in order to reconstruct himself into a new life, there must be a preliminary destruction: Birth is accompanied by Death. The corollary of death-in-life is that there be life-in-death. 4.3.3 In Search Of The Divine: Love And Time Eliot's conversion to Christianity in 1927 came as something of a surprise to his friends. The poet who had so clearly described in his poems the anguish of contemporary civilisation, and in doing so had seemed to speak for his generation, appeared to have performed a volte-face in asserting his Christian beliefs. With the luxury of hindsight, we might now see that from the first Eliot's poems were a personal exploration of his spiritual condition and that always present in them is a longing for redemption. Prufrock has his vision of mermaids, Gerontion of rain, the *Hollow Men* of the 'perpetual star' and 'Multifoliate rose'. Having been made the representative voice of a skeptical, atheistic and scientific age, Eliot disclaimed that his earlier poetry asserted the impossibility of belief. His sense of desolation, he said, did not deny the presence of belief: on the contrary, he wrote, 'doubt and uncertainty are merely a variety of belief'. In other words, Eliot's Christian beliefs were arrived at only after a long period of struggle, and indeed his Christianity was always a difficult possession, always requiring a spiritual strenuousness. Eliot knew of '

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the demon of doubt which is inseparable from the spirit of belief'.

Ash-Wednesday is perhaps the poem which most fully expresses these aspects of Eliot's spiritual journey. It presents us with particular difficulties in that so much of its symbolism is drawn from the Italian poet Dante (1265-1321) who in his Divine Comedy expressed with a glorious visual fullness the spiritual journey from Hell to Paradise. Eliot had immersed himself in the reading of Dante for many years and it seems natural that at the time of his conversion he felt a particular kinship with him. But Eliot never gives utterance to his Christian beliefs without also expressing the personal struggles they have entailed. The pain of renunciation is present in Section I behind the conviction that from renunciation there will grow a new life; in Section II, the attitude of Christian humility is conceived of as a dismemberment and emptying of the self. The third Section is unambiguous in its affirmation of an erotic attraction which is denied only with great difficulty. On the staircase of spiritual ascent, the penitent is assailed by the 'Distraction' of a female figure of enchanting loveliness and he must call upon a 'strength beyond hope and despair' to overcome worldly desire. The fifth poem presents the penitent as 'torn', and appealing for divine intercession: 'Will the veiled sister pray/For children at the gate/Who will not go away and cannot pray ...'. Ash-Wednesday is not a statement of belief. Eliot's Christianity was never so secure as a list of dogma to which he passively subscribed. Rather, these poems express the impulse to believe, the desire for a supernatural order, a craving as often thwarted as satisfied. Throughout his life Eliot had a passion for order. His manners were impeccable, his bearing fastidious. To a man such as Eliot who valued self-control, discretion and restraint ('

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Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion,'

he wrote in 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'), the unhappiness of his first marriage was a personal nightmare. One cannot but feel that in part the consolations of Christianity offered at this time a source of comfort and solace, however rare such moments may actually have been. Moreover Eliot found in the structure of Christian belief an ordered system which satisfied his own temperamental inclinations towards rationality and harmony. It came to seem to Eliot that Christianity offered a comprehensible account of the mortal world as he had come to perceive it: He finds the world to be so and so; he finds its character

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inexplicable by any non-religious theory: among religions he finds Christianity, and Catholic Christianity, to account most satisfactorily for the world and especially for the moral world within; and thus ... he finds himself inexorably committed to the dogma of the Incarnation. '

The moral world within ... '. This is the experience for which Eliot sought expression and validity in the tenets of Christian faith. The feelings of disgust which overwhelm the early poetry are the negative side of an impulse towards the pursuit of beauty. The ultimate beauty to which Eliot was drawn, and which is most lovingly expressed in parts of Ash-Wednesday and 'Burnt Norton', is the beauty of divine love. For Eliot the experience of human love only makes sense as a mortal version of an ultimately divine love: Grace to the Mother For the Garden Where all love ends. (Ash-Wednesday) According to Christian theology, the moment when divine love intervened most clearly in mortal existence was the moment of the Incarnation when, through the Virgin Mary, God took on the flesh of humanity in order to be manifest in the presence of Jesus Christ to share in mankind's suffering, and in the Resurrection to assert the promise of eternity. It is tempting to see the idea of the Incarnation appearing in Eliot's poetry even as early as the 'Preludes': I

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am moved by fancies that are curled Around these images, and cling: The notion of some infinitely gentle Infinitely suffering thing.

The Incarnation came to represent for Eliot an historical moment when the ultimate truth of divine love made itself manifest and so gave point and purpose to human relationships: '

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the love of man and woman . . . is only explained and made reasonable by the higher love, or else is simply the coupling of animals' (

Selected Essays, p.274). The early poems show human 'love' as no more than animal coupling and this explains the revulsion from human closeness to be found in them; the later poems show human love as transfigured by its origin in divine love, 'Where all love ends'. As well as representing the moment when God's love showed itself to man, the Incarnation is also theologically significant in manifesting an intersection of historical time and eternity. Historical time is time as mortality knows it, the passage of one year to another, one day to another, one moment to another. It is linear, a sequence of passing moments, a temporal successiveness. Eternity is timeless, the absence of time, a perpetual stillness. Eliot's conversion to Christianity brought with it a new attitude to time which we can see developing in his poems. In the early poems, time is a heavy burden to be endured. Prufrock is appalled when he looks into the future, for all he sees is a grinding repetition of tedium, habit, boredom:

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There will be time, there will be time To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;

There will be time to murder and create, And time for all the work and days of hands ... Time is an inexorable process of decay - 'I grow old ... I grow old ...' - and a medium of constant change and alteration: 'In a minute there is time/For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse'. In the 'Preludes' and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night', the onward flow of time is felt in

the leaden beats of the rhythm as well as in the repetitive sequence of hours and days that the poems describe. In 'The LoveSong of J. Alfred Prufrock', the very technique of the poem is an effort to escape the onward successiveness of time. The narrative structure of the poem is fugitive: it is hard to locate an ordering of past, present and future or of beginning, middle and end. The temporal relations between the parts of the poem - what events happened in what order - are deliberately blurred. The poem's fragmentariness, the jumbling of time-scales, is an attempt to escape the narrative sequence of past-present-future to create a simultaneity, a synchrony which suggests that what happens in the poem happens all at once - memory and expectation, action and reflection. The effect is to displace normal temporal relations rather than a Cubist painting dislodges normal spatial relations. In trying to make sense of life, Eliot had to make sense of time, to find some value and purpose in the otherwise meaningless transitoriness of birth, decay and death. Gerontion is an old man who has lost his active faculties, who now looks back over his life and sees not pattern but chaos. Time, or 'History', has deceived him, led him down corridors, and appealed to his vanities. In wondering whether the spider will 'Suspend its operations' or the 'weevil / Delay', Gerontion seems also to be wondering whether time will finally stand still and reveal the purpose to which it has been intending. In The Hollow Men the final section seems to hint at the senseless repetitiousness of time in the menacing fragment of a nursery rhyme. But in AshWednesday mortal time is seen to have meaning and purpose. In Section IV, which seems to be an address to a figure resembling the Virgin Mary, the speaker asks that she 'Redeem/The time'. Human history is redeemed, granted salvation, by the moment when God used the Virgin Mary as the instrument of the Incarnation, when eternity participated in mortality to show that there is a purpose in human history: a knowledge of God. In his choruses written to accompany a verse pageant-play called The Rock in 1934, Eliot wrote:

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Then came, at a predetermined moment, a moment in time and of time, A moment not out of time, but in time, in what we call history: transecting, bisecting the world of time, a moment in time but not like a moment of time, A moment in time but time was made through that moment: for without the meaning there is no time, and that moment of time gave the meaning. (

Section VII)

If we forgive Eliot his gnostic style (imitative of Biblical utterance and the choric style of Greek tragedy), we should understand that the moment here honored is the moment when God took on human form in the Incarnation and thus redeemed time by revealing eternity. At this point, we might need to remind ourselves that in his later poems Eliot was not writing religious propaganda or a poetry of religious statement. Eliot's poems are not sermons or persuasions towards Christian belief. The non-Christian reader is not placed thereby at a disadvantage in reading these poems. Whilst the poems might deal with highly complex concepts, they remain, above all, poetry, although the Christian believer is likely to respond to them with a more passionate assent. The concepts of time in 'Burnt Norton' are indeed puzzling, but the poetry shows itself in the masterly control of statement and image, of rhythm, cadence and feeling. For instance, in Section IV the poem shrinks to the single word 'Chill', almost as in a shiver, before moving expansively outwards to the vision of the kingfisher's wing catching the sunlight - a movement towards warmth, fullness and illumination. As well as seeking timeless moments, the poem also explores the activity of poetry itself as an effort to achieve

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stillness, 'as a Chinese jar still/Moves perpetually in its stillness'.

In the framework of belief in which the poem lodges itself, 'Burnt Norton' is undoubtedly Christian: but it is also an affirmation of faith in the meaningfulness of life. 4.4 Unit Summary • T. S. Eliot is a great craftsman with words. He was a great reformer of the English language like Wordsworth and John Donne. • The following are the main characteristics of T.S. Eliot's style and diction: - Power of phrasing by means of Auditory Imagination - He had a classical style - He used variety of diction - His use of language is characterized by economy, precision, variety, and appropriateness. - His imagery is derived both from the living scene and its parallel or echo of the past.

- He wanted to make the rhyme-scheme flexible enough to explain the complexities of the modern mind and the conflict of ideas. 4.5 Key Terms Decadence: Behavior, attitudes, etc. that show low moral standards. gnostic style: imitative of Biblical utterance and the choric style of Greek tragedy. 4.6 Check Your Progress 1) Discuss the style and diction in T. S. Eliot's Poetry 2) What were the themes in Eliot's Poetry?

Unit 5: Poetic Techniques and Features in Eliot's Poetry 5.0 Introduction 5.1 Unit Objective 5.2 Symbolism and Imagery 5.3 Metre And Rhyme 5.4 Syntax: Poetry As Music 5.5 The Use of Allusion 5.6 Studies/Criticism on T.S.Eliot's Poetry 5.6.1 Classicism

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in T. S. Eliot's Poetry 5.6.2 Obscurity in T. S. Eliot's Poetry 5.6.3 T. S. Eliot

as a Dramatist 5.6.4 T. S. Eliot's Theory and Practice in his Poetry 5.7 Unit Summary 5.8 Key Terms 5.9 Check Your Progress 5.0 Introduction Eliot used a stream-of- consciousness to show the chaos in modern man's thinking. In addition, he used many techniques such as imagism, repetition, fragmentation and other modernist techniques. All these techniques helped him to depict modern life for the reader and reflect its status in a real manner. 5.1 Unit Objective This unit intends to inform the learners on: • Symbolism and Imagery • Metre And Rhyme • Syntax: Poetry As Music • The Use of Allusion • Studies/Criticism on T.S.Eliot's Poetry: - Classicism

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in T. S. Eliot's Poetry - Obscurity in T. S. Eliot's Poetry - T. S. Eliot

as a Dramatist - T. S. Eliot's Theory and Practice in his Poetry 5.2 Symbolism and Imagery When Eliot arrived in England from Europe in 1914, to study Greek philosophy at Oxford, he brought with him a profound admiration for some of the nineteenth-century French poets he had read as a student in Paris during 1910-11. The works of Charles Baudelaire, Tristan Corbiere and Jules Laforgue, amongst others, exercised a powerful influence on the young Eliot, who was irresistibly drawn towards poetic effects in some French poetry of which most English writers at the turn of the century seemed blithely ignorant. In Baudelaire, Eliot found a poet whose verses, particularly in *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1857), expressed the more sordid aspects of life in the modern metropolis. From Corbiere and Laforgue, Eliot adopted a particular tone of mocking irony and grim despair filtered through abrupt changes of tone and imagery. What he found was a poetry which truly registered the modern consciousness: fragmented, unstable and profoundly skeptical. By contrast, what Eliot found in England was, for the most part, a poetry of emotional looseness, of nostalgia and escapism still striving for a vanished world of pastoral contentment. In bringing into English certain French techniques, Eliot was striving to restore to English poetry the sinewy muscularity, the emotional exactness and intellectual intensity of some of the seventeenth-century English poets and dramatists he most admired. To recover a vital tradition in English poetry Eliot had to effect a revolution. One aspect of that 'revolution' involved taking over from French poetry a procedure we identify, all too loosely, as 'Symbolism'. This is a term unfortunately so various in its application that we cannot now hope to define it very precisely. But let us begin by taking a simple example. We may say that the Union Jack is a symbol of the United Kingdom: we have here a relationship between a particular configuration of shapes and colors (the flag) and the abstract idea (the country) for which it stands. Thus, the symbol is an object which 'stands for', or expresses, something other than itself, and in the case of the flag we are taught by agreed convention that the signifier - the flag - stands in a clear relation to the signified - the country. Symbols, then, can have a clearly identifiable significance in this way when we recognise a direct relationship between the object and the thing for which it stands. Sometimes the relationship is not so direct: water may 'stand for' not only life-giving properties but also for death (by drowning) and Eliot is very conscious of such ambiguities in his use of such symbols. But the relationship between signifier and signified may be rather more strained. Suppose that what I want to express is not a particular 'thing' or body of ideas but a particular state of mind or a complex of emotions. In this sort of case, we are inevitably drawn towards a more private or subjective symbolism whereby the relationship between signifier and signified is much more tenuous and less direct. For all of us, at one time or another, a particular feeling or experience seems to be encapsulated by something which appears far removed from it: a particular sense-impression of colour, taste, sound or smell may suddenly prompt a surge of emotion. And this is often the way in which the Symbolist poetry read by Eliot works: we are given a signifier from which the signified has receded a good deal. Hence Symbolism is inevitably suggestive. Ideas and emotions are not directly described or overtly defined, but suggested by evocative symbols. Such poetry may have a haunting indefiniteness (one recalls Eliot's notorious phrase about poetry communicating before it is understood) - or a quite impenetrable obscurity. In the end, we may well want to decide that some symbols are best left unexplained, that we must allow them to exert their powerful suggestiveness rather than pursue a fugitive equation between the 'symbol' and what it 'stands for'. Take, for example, the case of Eliot's three white leopards in *Ash-Wednesday*. There they sit under a juniper-tree, an unblemished white, reposeful and self-satisfied after having consumed the organs and flesh of a human body. What are we to make of them? What do they 'stand for'? Source-hunting does not really help us. Let them remain in the imagination: powerful and docile; cruel and benign; beautiful and terrifying. All this is not to say that Eliot was a 'Symbolist' poet but rather to suggest that much of the power and 'meaning' of his poetry resides in his use of symbols (such as water, fire, and other symbols drawn from Dante or the Bible) and images. Briefly, we may say that images are comparisons which are explicit (a simile) or implicit (a metaphor). Why is an evening like a patient etherised on a table? Why is the corner of a woman's eye like a crooked pin? Why is the activity of the memory like a madman shaking a dead geranium? Eliot's early poetry often makes these startling images. We might well try to tease out the details of the comparison: like a madman, the memory throws together ('shakes') in an incoherent, dislocated way things which

were once beautiful and vital but now withered, like the dead geranium. But to 'explain' these images, you must first 'feel' them - for what Eliot's symbolism and imagery achieve is the unification of thought and feeling, so that intellect and emotion are simultaneously engaged. What Eliot also found in French Symbolist poetry - as in some seventeenth-century English poets such as John Donne - was the rapid transition from one symbol or image to another with the connection remaining implicit. So, for example, in one stanza of the 'Preludes' we abruptly shift from a cat eating butter to a child pocketing a toy to eyes peering through shutters to a crab gripping a stick, with no connecting thread between them apparent. So we have to collaborate with the poet and it may take some time before a coherence emerges. Indeed, we may have to go one step further and recognise that the effect relies not on the flow of associated images but on the gaps, the interstices, between them. What some of Eliot's poetry presents us with is the difficulty of saying anything at all. What we have is a kind of language-in-the-making, thoughts and feelings that tremble on the edge of expression.

5.3 Metre and Rhyme

One of the ways by which Eliot signaled his revolution was in his use of unfamiliar verse- structures. Indeed, many of Eliot's first readers would have been hard pressed to see any structure at all in his early poems, so shockingly new did they appear. Again, Eliot had learned from his French poets that the rich suggestiveness of Symbolism could not consort with the organized regularity of traditional forms and structures. The French poets were intent on breaking the tyranny of the alexandrine, a metrical unit of twelve syllables such as is to be found in Keat's line about a creature 'which like a wounded snake drags its slow length along' . Before too long, French 'vers libres' - freed verse - became 'vers libres' - free verse, whereby the poem adheres to no regular meter or form. What we find in Eliot's early poetry is a disruption of regularity. In his use of symbols and images we find an abruptness of transition so that they are juxtaposed with one another, so in Eliot's verse-structures we find the same dislocation and fragmentariness. Eliot's early poetry - 'The LoveSong

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of J. Alfred Prufrock', 'Portrait of a Lady', 'Preludes', 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' -

does adhere to a metrical organization. However, the disruption comes about because in any verse-paragraph (and we feel they are too irregular to be called stanzas) Eliot might juxtapose lines of different metrical length. Take for example, the opening of 'The Love Song'.

Lines of three stresses ('Let us go then, you and I ... The muttering retreats ... of insidious intent') lie with other lines which can be scanned as a regular iambic pentameter, an arrangement of ten alternating unstressed and stressed syllables as in ,

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Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels/And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells'.

The effect of this is one of nervous agitation as the lines refuse to settle into strict regularity - and the nervous agitation, of course, is Prufrock's. So when the meter does settle into regularity it does so with a particular effect. The lines about Hamlet (111-19) are in a strict iambic pentameter which self-consciously recalls the movement of Shakespeare's dramatic verse. Similarly, the

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lines 'I should have been a pair of ragged claws/Scuttling across the floors of silent seas'

achieve an anguished definiteness because of their metrical regularity achieved amidst irregularity. Visible in early poetry is a governing principle of metrical arrangement. Sometimes, though, Eliot composes his meters not just according to a metronomic regularity but also according to natural speech patterns to which he gives shape. His lines are so arranged as to catch the rhythms of contemporary speech so that what we hear is not a particular meter but a particular voice. Lines are arranged so that the emphasis might fall naturally into a pattern of speech and vocal inflexion: Well! and what if she should die some afternoon, Afternoon gray and smoky, evening yellow and rose; Should die and leave me sitting pen in hand With the smoke coming down above the housetops ... This, we feel, is natural speech given shape and order so that the emotions behind it - guilt and relief - are palpably felt in the movement of the words. The progression of Eliot's poetry shows a movement away from metrical forms towards an exploration of speech-rhythms (and this is hardly surprising in view of Eliot's interest in dramatic verse). In this respect, an obvious comparison offers itself in the Poems 1920 selection. This contains a number of poems written in quatrains with a strict meter and the contrast between their taut regularity and the looseness of 'Gerontion' could not be more startling. The disorder of 'Gerontion', we may say, represents the disorder in Eliot himself as he gropes towards an understanding of his own spiritual condition. The lines are composed not simply to satisfy a metrical pattern, but also as a way of measuring the weight and pace of the speaking voice. Hence,

the line 'To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk' echoes in its rhythm as in its words the utterance of the priest in the sacrament of communion. The section beginning at line 33 disposes the sentence structure over the line-endings so that weight is given to certain phrases which have an almost prayer-like sonority: 'Think now . . . Think now . . . Gives too late . . . Gives too soon . . . ' and this structure is echoed in the following section: 'Think at last . . . Think at last . . . '. But 'Gerontion' does not abandon meters. It is certainly less evident than the alternating light and heavy stresses of the earlier poems we have mentioned; it is now more freely disposed to catch the stresses of speech patterns, and the position of pauses within lines is more varied. There are lines which fall easily into an iambic pattern: 'An old man in a drafty house . . . She gives when our attention is distracted ... We have not reached a conclusion, when I stiffen in a rented house ... '. But in 'Gerontion' Eliot is attempting, not wholly successfully, to find some other structural principle than that of metrical organization. It is *The Hollow Men* which marks a new phase in Eliot's experiments with meter. The lines are arranged not according to a pattern of stresses, but of phrasing. The effect is altogether more incantatory, more like a chant or, significantly, more like a prayer. And, of course, it is with a broken prayer that the poem ends. This prayer-like quality becomes even more prominent in the later religious poems - *Ash-Wednesday*, *Journey of the Magi* and *Burnt Norton*. It is achieved by a principle of repetitiousness, of word, of phrasing and of rhythmical units. An obvious example is the litany in Section II of *Ash-Wednesday*, or the modified repetition of the poem's opening lines at the beginning of Section VI. In *Journey of the Magi* the lines for the most part are composed according to the natural stresses and pauses of a speaking voice, with significant exceptions. The dislocation of 'but set down / This set down / This' catches the sudden urgency of the speaker and a few lines later the run on of 'this Birth was/Hard and bitter agony for us' throws all the emphasis of agonized surprise onto the word 'Hard'. In *Burnt Norton* Eliot uses a four-stress line ('

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Time present and time past! Are both perhaps present in time future')

as the norm from which he departs and to which he returns to create varied effects of lyricism - a lyricism which is nevertheless rendered in the inflexions of natural speech.

We can observe the same movement towards incantation in Eliot's use of rhyme. In the early poems, rhyme is irregular and used for local effects: to set up the mock-lyrical opening of 'The Love Song' or the bathos of 'go/Michelangelo'. In 'Preludes', the rhyming is elaborate, binding the lines together and contributing to the musical effects promised in the poem's title. But in *The Hollow Men* rhyme has become part of the poem's structure, integral to the structure of repetitiousness. The opening section obsessively emphasizes its rhymes: 'men ... when'; 'Alas! ... meaningless ... grass ... glass'; 'together ... cellar'. In lines 19-28, the vision of harmony is caught in the full rhymes: 'column ... solemn ...'; 'swinging ... singing'; 'are ... star'. The supple fluidity of *Ash-Wednesday* and *Burnt Norton* is partly created by the frequent repetition of vowel sounds not only as rhymes at line-endings but also within lines. For example, read aloud lines 107-16 of *Ash-Wednesday* and listen to the way the sound captures a sensuous fullness and immediacy.

5.4 Syntax: Poetry as Music Amongst the ways in which Eliot explored the resources of language were his experiments with syntax - the arrangement of words so as to compose a sentence. It is often the syntax which makes some of his poems appear puzzling and alarming. His disruption of syntax was part of his effort of forcing, or even dislocating, language into his meaning. It also contributes to the musical effects of his poetry. Indeed, one of the avowed aims of the French Symbolist poets was to recover from music what they thought properly belonged to poetry. This could be done in an obvious way by exploiting the simple fact that words make sounds, and that the sounds of words might contribute to their sense (a ready example is the literary device of onomatopoeia which describes a word whose sound, such as 'click', mimics its sense). But musicality could also be achieved in another way, by allowing poems the indefiniteness and suggestiveness of music. We cannot comfortably say of a piece of music that it 'means' so-and-so: it may suggest all sorts of emotions simultaneously. Music, too, is based on continuity, on sounds which progress from one another successively. Indeed, we might say of music that the experience of continuity is all that it can truly present to us, the notes making constructions which are modified, departed from, returned to, restated and brought to rest. We might note how many of Eliot's titles refer us to music: a love song, preludes, a rhapsody, a quartet. In the syntactical arrangement of words, Eliot sometimes aims for effects of continuity or suspension which are akin to music.

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poems. 'The Love Song', 'Portrait of a Lady', 'Preludes' and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night'

are punctuated according to the conventional rules of syntax. Sometimes complications arise in our reading of the poems simply because the sentences are lengthy. Many of the verse paragraphs in 'The Love Song' compose a single sentence and it is the very length of the sentence, uncoiling through its subordinate clauses, which carries the effect of boredom and languor. In the 'Preludes' and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' the heavy stresses and lengthy sentences capture a sense of fatigue, of the dragging weight of time itself. But in 'Gerontion' we find at the very opening a syntactical complication which is a very part of the poem's meaning. The speaker tells us that: I was neither at the hot gates Nor fought in the warm rain Nor knee deep in the salt marsh, heaving a cutlass, Bitten by flies, fought. Why the repetition of 'fought'? Syntax requires that the word need occur only once, so why does Eliot duplicate it? What the lines describe is action, and the energy of fighting is caught in the agitated rhythm and muscular consonants. But of course what Gerontion says is that he did not fight and the negatives only gain prominence when, paradoxically, we reach the last word, 'fought', which because of its place in the syntax is suddenly limp and lame. The word is dead, inert, drained of energy, as exhausted and empty as Gerontion himself. Later in the same poem we find: In the juvenescence of the year Came Christ the tiger In depraved May, dogwood and chestnut . Why is there no full stop after 'tiger'? Why the incomplete line and the gap before we continue? It is as if the mention of Christ as tiger, the devourer, stops the poet dead in his tracks. There is an appalled pause, a suspension in the language mirroring the poet's own hesitation before the figure of Christ. In these cases, we find Eliot's use of syntax contributing to the overall poetic meaning.

In *The Hollow Men* we find a challenging absence of conventional punctuation. It is as if the hollow men are struggling to utter anything at all: 'Our dried voices, when/We whisper together/Are quiet and meaningless. : . .'. 'Their 'lost kingdoms' are a 'broken jaw' and they 'avoid speech'. The poem collapses into unpunctuated fragments - 'For Thine is/Life is/For Thine is the' - as if the 'Shadow' has fractured them. Only at one point in the poem does the language flow more confidently. The speaker thinks of the eyes he dare not meet 'There', where voices are In the wind's singing More distant and more solemn Than a fading star. We would normally expect the verb 'are' to come later in the sentence (after 'singing'). As it stands, the verb, pointed up by the rhyme, is curiously vulnerable and exposed, gratefully saying that 'There' voices and singing 'are'. By his control of syntax, Eliot renders the feeling of wonderment. The opening of *Ash-Wednesday* looks as if its language is heading for collapse, just as it did in *The Hollow Men*:

Because I do not hope to turn again Because I do not hope Because I do not hope to turn . . .

But suddenly the language recovers to compose thrilling music. These opening lines, unpunctuated and repetitious, enact their own sort of 'turning', hesitating and circling before arriving at the main verb - 'I no longer strive'. The 'music' of *Ash-Wednesday* is achieved by the lightness of punctuation, a repetitiousness resembling a liturgical chant and, quite remarkably, a use of silence. Take the close of Section III where the final line, 'but speak the word only', after a long pause finally 'speaks' in answer to the threatened despair of 'Lord, I am not worthy'. Or take the close of Section IV. After the appeal to 'Redeem the time, redeem the dream ... Till the wind shakes a thousand whispers from the yew' we subside to 'And after this our exile' - with a blank silence following it. We might fill out that silence for ourselves if we know the words of the prayer to the Virgin Mary: 'and after this our exile shows unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus'. The poem leads us towards this silence, towards a contemplation of what cannot be put into words. The challenge it throws down to conventional syntax and language is that they do not say enough, that they cannot express the divine. As a final example of Eliot's manipulation of (or escape from) syntax, look at the opening of Section IV in *Ash-Wednesday*. Beginning 'Who walked between the violet and the violet ...' we seem at first to have a question. As the interrogative ('who') is repeated, so we await the question mark - which never arrives. And so the 'who' is silently transformed from an interrogative into a statement with the subject ('The woman who' or 'She who') unstated. It is as if to nominate the subject would be to desecrate it: it is present but tantalizingly hidden, an incipient force in the syntax as in Eliot's life. Eliot's use of syntax, then, is a part of his procedure to force language into attempting to say the unsayable. It is an instrument in his 'raid on the inarticulate'.

5.5 The Use of Allusion

One of the most obvious difficulties which Eliot's poetry presents to the reader is the learned scholarship it bears. There is no blinking fact of Eliot's erudition: he was widely read in European literature (including, of course, classical antiquity), in anthropology, psychology, philosophy and theology. His scholarship is everywhere present in his poems, whether it be in the use of French models for his earliest poetry or in the philosophical explorations of the later. But Eliot did not parade his learning for its own sake. His passionate engagement with man's intellectual explorations was for Eliot a matter of personal discovery, of locating himself in a context of historical development, of accounting for his own nature and the nature of twentieth-century life. He wrote in his consciousness not only of using various intellectual traditions, but of adding to them as well. Eliot's allusiveness - the explicit or implicit references he makes to other literature or to established bodies of thought - is another of the strategies by which he attempts to express himself more completely in his poems. Eliot's allusiveness, then, is a way of incorporating himself and his work in a particular tradition. As I have described elsewhere, Eliot conceived of tradition not as something locked into the past but as a living presence existing contemporaneously with him. He refers to other works of literature not as a gesture towards the past but as a way of bringing the past into the present. Hence the purpose of his epigraphs is to announce a parallel situation to the one described in the poem. So, for example, the epigraph to 'The LoveSong of J. Alfred Prufrock' speaks of a figure in

Hell talking to one who is presumed to remain in Hell and thus to whom the truth might be safely revealed. So, the poem itself is declared to be an attempt to tell the truth of the twentieth-century urban Hell in which Prufrock exists. The poem's references to Andrew Marvell, John Donne, Shakespeare and Chaucer (amongst others) are ways of saying that Prufrock's/Eliot's situation is not unique, that the problem of Prufrock is inherent in all men at all times. Marvell, Donne, Shakespeare, Chaucer are still with us because, like Eliot, they addressed the essential, unchanging conditions of man's existence. It is often said that Eliot's allusions to past writers is his way of measuring the present age against past ages to find the present more disheveled, squalid and despairing. Certainly it is true that the urgency in his allusiveness springs from his conviction that the modern age, for its survival, needs to recover its roots and return to its civilizing sources (one of which, for example, would be Christian belief). Eliot's writings everywhere show a revulsion from contemporary civilisation, its materialism, philistinism and mass uniformity. The opening of 'Sweeney Erect', for example, summons up the world of classical mythology in a language that is reverentially elevated, richly poetic and, ultimately, nostalgic for a world of heroic passion and endeavor. Eliot's allusions are a way of condemning the present, but they do not simply refer us longingly to a lost Golden Age. Eliot is also creating antecedents for himself. He looks back into history not to lament its remoteness but to find recurring patterns of existence: suffering and (possible) salvation. From the beginning, Eliot perceived history not as a linear sequence of events but as patterns of recurrence and his allusions are ways of describing that recurrence. It should come as no surprise, then, that Eliot's later work is drawn more and more to a conception of infinity not as an endless sequence of passing time but as the absence of time, as stillness, a continuing 'now'. In his use of allusions to suggest the continuing presence of the past, Eliot is expressing a circular rather than linear view of history. Man's predicament does not essentially change. Eliot's allusions often come in the form of a modified or disguised quotation and we may take a single example - almost at random - to see the resonance it achieves. In 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' the speaker asks: Would it have been worth while, To have bitten off the matter with a smile, To have squeezed the universe into a ball To roll it toward some overwhelming question, To say: 'I am Lazarus, come from the dead ... The image of squeezing something into a ball and rolling it echoes the close of Andrew Marvell's 'To his Coy Mistress', a passionate poem of seduction in which the speaker urges the unwilling girl: Let us roll all our strength and all Our sweetness up into one ball, And tear our pleasures with rough strife Through the iron gates of life. Thus, though we cannot make our sun Stand still, yet we will make him run. Marvell's speaker vehemently (and, of course, speciously - but his seduction is a game of persuasion) asserts that by consummating their passion the couple will win some sort of ascendancy over life. Time will not stand still for them, but by full-blooded passion they will live life to the full and have a mastery over time by not wasting it: they will break through life's constraints (its 'iron gates') into a more fulfilling life. Now, Eliot's Prufrock is obsessed with time: time as occupied by endless routine, habit, tedium, time being wasted. He might make something of his life by having the courage to ask some 'overwhelming question' (the question was never so overwhelming to Marvell's determined seducer!) or to tell some overwhelming truth about life and death (such as the resurrected Lazarus might have told). But Prufrock's mounting determination abruptly withers, for he can only foresee the woman to whom he might address the question receiving it with haughty distaste: 'That is not what I meant at all. That is not it, at all'. Eliot refers to Marvell's poem as a way of measuring Prufrock's inadequacy. The stirrings of passion in Prufrock are stifled at birth and he remains the hesitant, tongue-tied, ineffectual anti-type of the Marvellian lover. Eliot makes his allusions in other ways than by overt or covert quotation. On many occasions it is his style which is imitative. The early poems are at times highly derivative of the style of the French Symbolists, particularly Jules Laforgue and Theophile Gautier. In 'The Love Song', the passage beginning 'No! I am not Prince Hamlet ...' has the muscular verve and dash of Elizabethan dramatic verse. In this respect, it is worth noting how many of Eliot's poems are dramatic monologues spoken by created personae: Prufrock, an unnamed associate of the Lady, Gerontion, one of the Magi, and Eliot was much preoccupied by the notion of a truly contemporary dramatic verse. Eliot's stylistic effects as well as his allusions often return us to the great Elizabethan dramatists about whom Eliot wrote: Marlowe, Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, Heywood, Tourneur, Webster, Ford, Massinger and Marston. What Eliot's allusions attempt to achieve, then, is a synthesis of past and present. He introduces into his poetry references to past literature so as to assert a unity with it. It was thus inevitably the case that as Eliot found himself drawn towards Christianity his work should draw on two principal sources of Christian understanding: the poetry of Dante and the Bible. The later poems are so suffused with such references that 'allusion' is an inadequate description. By the time of his conversion, Eliot's poems do not refer to these texts but rather take root in them as assertions of faith.

5.6 Studies/Criticism on T.S. Eliot's Poetry

5.6.1 Classicism in T. S. Eliot's Poetry

Eliot has been considered as a classicist because of the strong hold of his critical intellect on his creative imagination. As he stated that he is a

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classicist in literature, an Anglo-Catholic in religion and a Royalist in politics.

He is a classicist of a different kind. Although he is a classicist, he has digested strong elements of romanticism. He asserts in his critical treatise namely

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Tradition and Individual Talent: "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality."

In other words, the poet must exercise self-control and restraint. He universalises his emotions. His aim is to achieve "negative capability". The poet can achieve his goal if he releases from personal emotions and from personal sensibility. This poetic process is called 'objective correlative.' Eliot himself uses this process which gives poetry a hard intellectual tone which is one of the chief characteristics of classicism. The following are the views on classicism by T.

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S. Eliot. Subjugation of Romantic 'Inner Voice' (Subjectivity): Eliot emphasized that the classical school of poetry achieved elegance and dignity. The romantic believes in the poet's own 'inner voice.' Thus he degenerates into chaos and license. He indulges in trivialities. Eliot has pointed out the difference between the romantic school and the classical school. While the classical poetry is complete, mature, orderly, the romantic poetry is fragmentary, immature, and chaotic. This indicates that Eliot has accepted the formula of completeness and formal perfection of classical poetry. Eliot's kinship with Augustan classicism: There is a deep similarity between Eliot's poetry and Augustan poetry. Eliot has stressed the importance of order and discipline of authority and tradition, and of organization and pattern of the Augustan poets. He has emphasized on the organized labor of intellect rather than on the romantic inspiration and institution. Maxwell remarks: "In this Intellectual bias, in the belief that authority rather than liberty is the guide to truth, and in his regard for formal details, is Eliot's kinship with Augustan classicism." Further this critic has pointed out: "Each accepts an existing poetic framework, the rules of an objective authority and makes a conscious effort to work within that framework. Satirical wit plays an important part in both, and with it goes a concern for the necessity of cultivating precision of form and word. This requires an intellectual rather than an emotional, instinctive approach to the task of selecting words, of relating them to each other and to the whole. Yet each of these similarities also involves a difference. The system to which Eliot relates his poetry has a greater scope than Augustan classical authority and becomes a more vital part of the poetry which depends on it. By its relationship with Eliot's poetry the traditional system acquires new significance and becomes a living part of the poetic experiences transcribed in the poetry." Eliot's aspiration for classical preciseness for his symbols and imagery: The romantics make use of symbols as centers of unlimited expansion, with the result there is vagueness and indefiniteness in their poetry. Eliot's images are clear-cut, concrete and precise. He draws his symbols from traditional sources. He does not alter their original significance. According to Maxwell, T. S. Eliot maintains the essential suggestive quality of all symbolism, while limiting the suggestiveness to a clearly defined range. Eliot's approach to symbol and imagery is classical. He retains the suggestiveness which differentiates poetry from prose. His poetry reveals

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economy of classical school; he has the epigrammatic preciseness, compactness and terseness. In this manner he achieves suggestiveness and elaboration by the help of his symbols and images which have

the

background of literary tradition. Eliot's concept of literary tradition: Eliot has stressed the importance of literary tradition. This literary tradition indicates the accumulated wisdom and experience of the ages. Let us take his critical essay Tradition and Individual Talent. In this essay he surveys European literature from Homer down to his own day as a single whole. According to him, English literature must be scrutinized as a part of this literary tradition. Maxwell is of the opinion that a significant feature of classicism is "its acceptance of an already existing background whose function is to provide the poem's incidental symbolism." Pope draws his symbols from the world of classical mythology in his epic The Rape of the Lock. Similarly, Eliot draws his symbols from the traditional literature of Europe. In The Waste Land he blends the traditional European and eastern thought which renders a great purpose in his interpretation of the contemporary problem. The fertility myths, vegetation ceremonies and the Grail legend are all used by him in the same manner as Pope classical mythology in order to express his idea. In the section, The Burial of the Dead, he uses the literary tradition in order to elucidate the present against the background of tradition. The other term "the objective correlative" is used in order to indicate the significance of the literary tradition in Eliot's poetry. Eliot's wit has an affinity with the classics. Pope was witty because he wanted to entertain but Eliot's object is different. He uses wit as an instrument for commenting on modern life and its problems. It is not an end in itself. On the other hand, it is hand-made for the serious purpose of his poetry. So, Eliot's life bears a resemblance with that of the Augustans because the latter were moralists whose aim was to satirize human frailties in their civilization. As with the classical poets, Eliot's wit has brevity, careful phrasing and clarity of thought and expression. Wit is one of the chief characteristics of classical poetry which has been used by T.S. Eliot very successfully made us understand the human frailties of the 20th century.

5.6.2 Obscurity in T. S. Eliot'

s Poetry For one thing Eliot's poetry is not useful for the masses. It is for the learned few-the people with scholarly and cultivated taste in literature. His poetry makes great demand for the reader. He must be well versed for the literature of Europe, so that he may understand the poet's references found in his poems. Therefore, its appeal is sought voluntarily, in protest against the demands of a public kept in ebbing in England by Georgian poetry, and in the hope of finding or creating an audience which, though small, would at least realize that poetry makes demands of the reader as well as of the poet. Depth of Thought: Eliot's poetry deals with the inner states of mind and systems of values. He writes complex things and also about mental states. He not only deals with subtle human emotions but also with the subconscious and the unconscious. He implies the dramatic monologue in order to analyze the state of the mind or conflict within. Gerontion and The LoveSong of J. Alfred Prufrock are studies of different states of mind. There are sudden jumps and missing links with the ideas which makes the poem difficult to follow. For example, The Waste Land deals with problems of the post-war civilisation while Four Quartets is concerned with time and eternity. Such difficult subjects and study of states of mind are not easily intelligible to the modern reader. Poetic Shorthand: The difficulty of Eliot's poetry also arises from his borrowings from many literatures and many philosophies. His wide reading extended not only to the study of Christian mythology but also to the Hindu and the Buddhist philosophies. There are references to several books and sometimes lines are taken bodily from different important classical works to support his ideas. Quotations and allusions are found in "God's Plenty" in The Waste Land. I.A. Richards calls this device, the poetic shorthand. Sometimes a quotation is modified so as to fit into his context. All these things render his poems difficult for the average reader. Brevity: Ezra Pound acquainted Eliot with the technique of compactness and compressions in poetic technique. The connecting link, the punctuation and the grammatical conjunction are eliminated for the sake of compression of the subject matter. He is able to condense "great riches in a little room." Look at The Waste Land, its subject matter is so vast that it is covered in four hundred and thirty-three lines. Another poet would have expanded it into an epic of sizable proportion. Moreover, the poet jumps from one concept to another, his transition from one idea to another, is quite sudden. This accounts for his brevity and flexibility. He is keen to omit what can be left out. The logical links are purposely omitted. This renders him difficult and obscure. New Technique: Eliot draws largely on the technique of Laforgue and Baudelaire. These French Symbolists supplied him with images and symbols. The imagists like Ezra Pound showed him

the use of concrete images to capture fleeting experiences. The metaphysical poets sharpened his wit and enabled him to make his own conceits and ironic contrasts. Eliot's conceit of the fog being a cat reminds one of Donne. Moreover, myths borrowed from ancient cultures and literature makes his poetry difficult to follow. So, all these things put together - images, symbols, myths and the creation of new rhythms render his poetry difficult for the lay readers. Complexity of subject-matter: Eliot's poetry does not deal with the commonplace subjects like the Nightingales, Cuckoos and Daffodils. He deals with the harsh and complex reality of modern urban life. As the subject is complex his poetry cannot be easy. He poses the problems of modern civilization, its survival and its system of values and above all man's moral progress. All these are complex and almost insoluble problems and as such his poetry is difficult to follow. Music of Ideas: Another element that contributes to the obscurity of his poetry is what I.A. Richards calls it "the music of ideas." Eliot's words are chosen with reference to their sense and sound. He picks out the vividly memorable phrase. He squeezes words to extract full juice and shades of their meanings. One has to read his poems two or three times in order to fully understand the meaning of his poetry. Some critics feel that though Eliot's poetry is difficult, it is not obscure. It contains fundamental brain-works. It requires the conscious effort on the part of the reader to understand the undercurrents of thought in his poems. The lack of connecting links is not a serious hurdle. George Williams writes in this connection: "Eliot has sequential logic, that is, he employs rational connections, writes in accordance with the inferences which are probably to be drawn from certain situations, characters, actions, objects, response or relations." 5.6.3 T.

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S. Eliot as a Dramatist Eliot's fame as a dramatist rests on five plays : (1) Murder in the Cathedral (2) The Family Reunion (3) The Cocktail Party (4) Confidential Clerk (5) The Elder Statesman T. S. Eliot aimed at reviving poetic drama by writing these plays. His writing considerably influenced the course of modern English drama.

Significance of Eliot plays Eliot's plays must be examined against the light of his intention which was to bring poetic drama back to the modern age. Conscious of his weaknesses, he constantly strove to overcome them in successive plays. He faithfully kept up the exploration and experimentation that he said was necessary in achieving greater approximation to the unattainable ideal" of poetic drama. The plays are the practical applications of his theory of poetic drama and in each, one can observe his technical skill as a poet. They are, in a way, a continuation of his poetry; his attempts to carry to a larger and wider audience the themes of his poetry. Development of Eliot Dramatic Genius Eliot was capable of viewing his last piece of work with critical detachment and taking up the next work with the intention of avoiding the mistakes he had made in the earlier one. There is a clear evolution in his work from *Murder in the Cathedral* to *The Elder Statesmen*. Technically each play is an improvement on the former. The subject of *Murder in the Cathedral* was from the early history of England. Problems of versification and language were solved by the choice of a neutral style. But the solution was special to this play because verse was easily acceptable in a play whose subject was historical. If poetic drama were to stand on its own against prose drama, he realized that the subjects chosen should be from contemporary life, and that there should be a flexibility in the verse. The four plays that followed had contemporary settings and were more or less in verse throughout. *The Family Reunion* suffered from a lengthy exposition; "a chorus of obtuse aunts and uncles, an odd appearance of the furies and an ambiguous kind of ending in that one is not clear whether to consider the play as the tragedy of the mother, or the salvation of the son." He avoids drawbacks in *The Cocktail Party*, where exposition is short and there is no use of the supernatural or the chorus. Each of his plays mark a definite step forward, overcoming earlier errors, and showing "a miraculous development in craftsmanship".

Diction and Versification Aware that the earlier attempts of authors at poetic drama had failed because of their lifeless imitations of Elizabethan blank verse, Eliot turned to an earlier model that of *Everyman*. But his aim was to forge a new form suitable for his plays. He managed to develop a flexible verse form from contemporary idioms which would serve all his purposes. Weakness in Characterization: He achieved remarkable success in his language and versification. But he has not done equally well in his characterisation. His characters are seldom individualized. Usually, they are sophisticated or aristocratic by birth or association. Their insights are often of a remote and unfamiliar kind, too profound and complex to allow for an easy appreciation of the plays. Eliot's characters lack reality and are "agents manipulated to make real some spiritual experience". Plot: All his plays have in common a preoccupation with the nature of sainthood and the ability of a saint's death to benefit the life of others. This is, of course, most obvious in *Murder in the Cathedral*. All the plays have a kind of double pattern. On one level, they entertain; on the other hand they provoke thought on a higher plane. Eliot's plays embody his tragic sense of life which comes from the awareness of the mystery and inevitability of suffering. The human condition implies suffering. In his plays there are characters who exist on different levels of consciousness. The choice they make in a certain situation reveals their character and the level of consciousness they have achieved. Thomas in *Murder in the Cathedral* is at the top of the scale in spiritual awareness and he chooses martyrdom. The element of tragedy in all his plays comes from the awareness that Man is imperfect, and that he suffers owing to the original sin. Traditional dramatic categories cannot be applied to Eliot's plays. They cannot be termed either as tragedies or as comedies. A.G. George calls them "existential plays". Drawbacks: The fault most often found in his play is that his characters are not individuals and thus lack reality. The thought expressed is too often subtle and complex for easy understanding. The dialogues sound too unnatural and artificial. Another criticism is against the inclusion of artificial supernatural elements such as the Furies and the spiritual guardians Julia and Alec. The sudden switch from a light sense of social comedy to serious and intense philosophical dialogue is somewhat disconcerting. These are the various criticisms made against Eliot's plays. The experience presented in the play is also said to be too remote from ordinary life, to make effective drama. Eliot's achievement and greatness cannot be diminished in the light of the criticism leveled against him. The work he has done in versification alone entitles him to fame. At his highest moments he achieves that fusion of drama and poetry which he advocated. The speech of the Chorus in *Murder in the Cathedral* is one clear example of such a fusion. Technically, Eliot achieved a great deal with his power of phrasing and the careful use of words. His plays are, undoubtedly, great literature and as such are assured of a permanent place in dramatic literature. 5.6.4 T. S. Eliot'

s Theory and Practice in his Poetry Perhaps the greatest contribution both to English poetry and criticism has been made by those poets who have been critics as well. Dryden, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Arnold and Eliot belong to this category. Their contribution to the theory of poetry and to the actual achievement in poetic outlook has been really significant. Eliot, the poet-critic, has not only added to the wealth of critical theories but also made a sizable contribution to 20th century poetry. Realism and complexity: It is necessary that contemporary poetry - if it is to have any significance must bring out the complexities and variety of modern life. T. S. Eliot desires to bring poetry out of the land of rainbows and daffodils to the world of factory chimneys, pubs, and harlots and all the things to which we are surrounded today. His poetry is urban and belongs to the industrial and scientific world and as such it is both complex and difficult. In his essay on The Metaphysical Poets he writes: "Poets in our civilization must be difficult. Our civilization's

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complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate

devices, cultivate all the possibilities of words in order to express entirely new conditions."
Impersonality of poetry:

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Departing from the romantic tradition, which regarded poetry as continuous outburst of personal feelings, Eliot emphasized the impersonal nature of poetry. He

regards subjectivity as the source of eccentricity and chaos. He, the poet, as an actor playing the role, must be a reliable and well informed spectator of modern life. According to him,

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poetry is "not turning loose of emotion but an escape from emotion, not an expression of personality but as escape from personality."

He regards poems as a medium of expression and not as a device of revelation of personality. Objective correlative: However, the poet cannot conceal his personality in writing a poem. Even while offering ideas and images, he indirectly reveals his likes and dislikes. So he has to find

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an objective correlative "a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion."

The objective correlative implies three important things - (i) a medium like tragedy or dramatic monologue or sonnet to express his basic ideas; (ii) the creation of certain factors as for example The LoveSong of J. Alfred Prufrock, and Gerontion for expression of certain points of view which echo the poet's beliefs, (iii) the expression of emotion to certain objects which are precise and realistic. For example, 'thunder', 'game of chess', 'leopard', are mentioned by Eliot to express certain feelings. It is necessary to depersonalize the personal emotions so that they outlive the personal beliefs of the poet and become universally acceptable on account of great intensity and significance in them. The shaping spirit of imagination: Eliot regards imagination and not inspiration as the core of the poem. He believes in disciplining both matter and form so that the discordances are removed for the reconciliation of opposites or the general with the concrete, idea with the image, the tradition with modernity has to be achieved through the shaping spirit of imagination. The main function of imagination is to imply sensibility and to produce some order out of the heterogeneous elements which go into making of the poem. T. S. Eliot writes in this connection: "

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When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experiences; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and

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these two experiences have nothing to do with each other;

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in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes". It is

not necessary that the poet must offer absolutely new and original thoughts. Even the greatest poets have largely relied on the common fund of ideas available in their times. Their achievements lay in charging them with a new life and giving them a new significance. Therefore, poetic composition is a process of great labor and requires the utmost use of man's inner faculty. Importance of classicism: Eliot is pre-eminently a classicist. He believes in tradition because it stood the test of the time. While writing, he keeps certain ideals before himself. These ideals are objectivity, discipline, impersonality, constant revision, reference to tradition and reader's response. Moreover, his literary tradition covers the whole of European literature. He does not want English literature to be insular or isolated from the main streams of youthful literature. Values of literary tradition: Eliot attaches great importance to tradition. His conception of tradition is essentially dynamic. He observes all care and caution in the adoption of a tradition. He declares that we should not adhere to tradition blindly or timidly. In this respect novelty is better than repetition. As he remarks: "Tradition is a matter of much wider significance. It cannot be inherited, and if you want it you must obtain it by great labor. It involves, in the first place the historical sense, which we may call nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year; and

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the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence;

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the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his

own generation in his bones, but with

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a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and a simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and

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of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional.

And it is at the same time what

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makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity."

There should be conformity between the old and the new.

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The past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past. A poet who is aware of this, will be aware of great difficulties and responsibilities.

An adequate Knowledge of the past is absolutely essential. The future cannot be built up in the absence of the past. Thus, a tradition is a connecting link between the past and the future. Keeping in view the intrinsic value of literary tradition Eliot

remarks: "What is to be insisted upon is that the poet must develop or procure the

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consciousness of the past and that he should continue to develop this consciousness throughout his career." 5.7

Unit Summary His mastery of language, and his amazing achievements in the creation of concepts, was the natural outcome of his impatience with mere words as a means of communication. The method of perceiving inner realities, through their reflection in concrete image and all the disciplines which have to accompany its translation into language, naturally presented difficulties. But it bought back life-force into poetry and captured and communicated the rich mystic quality of perception in the ritual of words. 5.8 Key Terms Juxtaposition means placing two things side by side so as to highlight their differences. Writers use it for rhetorical effect. Writers juxtapose divergent elements frequently: wealth and poverty, beauty and ugliness, or darkness and light. Iambic pentameter is a type of metric line used in traditional English poetry and verse drama. The term describes the rhythm, or meter, established by the words in that line; rhythm is measured in small groups of syllables called "feet". 5.9 Check Your Progress 1. Discuss the Symbolism and Imagery Eliot used. 2. Do you know how Eliot used the Metre And Rhyme in his poetry? 3. Amongst the ways in which Eliot explored the resources of language were his experiments with syntax, Discuss it. 4. Discuss the use of allusion in Eliot's work. Unit 6: T.S.Eliot's Contribution to Poetry, Society, & Life 6.0 Introduction 6.1 Unit Objective 6.2 T.S.Eliot's Contribution to Poetry 6.3 T.S.Eliot's Influence in 20th Century Poetry 6.3.1 Eliot's originality 6.3.2 Eliot's influence on his contemporaries 6.3.3 Eliot's universality 6.3.4 A Great Innovator of the English Language 6.3.5 Eliot's use of new techniques 6.4 Revival of Poetic Drama : T. S. Eliot contribution 6.4.1 State of English Drama before Eliot 6.4.2 Eliot's Contribution to the Revival of Poetic Drama 6.5 Religion, literature, and society in the work of T. S. Eliot 6.6 Unit Summary 6.7 Key Terms 6.8 Check Your Progress 6.0 Introduction Thomas Sterns Eliot was born at St.Louis missouri. USA on 26 September 1888. He had his education up to MA in the USA. He spent a year at the Sorbonne in Paris. Again he returned to Harvard working for a doctorate on philosophy on Francis Heaberty Bradley. In the meanwhile he spent some time at Marburg, Germany and Oxford, London. On 22 september 1914, Eliot met Ezra pound in London. That meeting brought about a total change in Eliot's life and career. Pound persuaded him to settle in England in view of his future as a writer. Eliot married on '16 JUne 1915 an English woman. Pound took the initiative to publish Eliot's poem.The LoveSong of J.Alfred Prufrock in a factory in 1915 while he worked as a school teacher. On 19 March 1917 he joined the Lloyds bank, London. Poem by T.S. Eliot was published by Alfred Knopf in 1920. In the same Year, along with Wyadhem Lewis he went to Paris. There he met Jmes Joyce. Ill health forced him to move to Lausanne, Switzerland. While returning, he stayed for a few days in Paris and submitted the manuscript of The Waste Land to pound. It first appeared in Dial, Boni and Liveright published it in New York in 1922. Eliot started criterion in the same year. He wanted it to be a European review. The Journal asted for seventeen years. In 1925 Eliot left Lloyds and joined Faber and Gwyer (later Faber and Faber) in 1927 he became a British citizen 1922'1939 was perhaps his most productive period. The Hollow Men was published in 1925, Journey of the Magi in 1927, A song of simeon in 1928 Marina and Ash Wednesday in 1930. His last great poem, Four Quarters, was published during 1936-40 Eliot also wrote a number of verse dramas too.

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Murder in the Cathedral (1935) The Family Reunion (1939) the Cocktail Party (1949) The Confidential Clerk (1953) and the Elder Statesman. 6.1

Unit Objective This Unit intends to inform the learners on: • T.S.Eliot's Contribution to Poetry • T.S.Eliot's Influence in 20th Century Poetry • Revival of Poetic Drama :

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T. S. Eliot contribution • Religion, literature, and society in the work of T. S. Eliot 6.2 T.S.Eliot'

s Contribution to Poetry Eliot's Contribution to English Poetry As a poet, Eliot belongs to the Classical tradition. He has nothing to do with the Romantic excesses and 'purple patches'. A classicist remains crystal clear and controlled in his expression, and his guiding force is reason. He exalts the head over the heart, objectivity vs subjectivity, reason over emotion. He owes allegiance to an external authority, like that of Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Homer, Virgil, or the three great tragedians of Greek literature, whereas a Romantic listens to his own 'inner voice'. No one can make such a threadbare distinction between 'classicism' and 'Romanticism' as R.A. Scott – James has done in his brilliant book, *The Making of Literature: Form, outward form, is the first distinctive element in classicism, and on this beauty of outward appearance, with its attributes of symmetry, balance, order, proportion, reserve, it takes its stand.*

And as contrasted with this the romantic tends to emphasize the spirit which lies behind form – not the formless but the freedom which is not content with any but the freedom which is not content with any one form, but experiments, and expresses itself now in this, now in that way, as the spirit dictates. The first tends always to emphasize the "this – worldliness" of the beauty that we know; the second, its "other – worldliness".... The one seeks always a mean; the other an extremity. Repose satisfies the Classic; adventure attracts the Romantic. The one appeals to tradition; the other demands the novel. On the one side we may range the virtues and defects which go with the nations of fitness, propriety, measure, restraint, conservatism, authority, calm, experience, comeliness; on the other, those which are suggested by excitement, energy, restlessness, spirituality, curiosity, troublelessness, progress, liberty, experiment, provocativeness. This long passage has been quoted here to acquaint the readers with the salient features of 'Classicism' (the school is which Eliot belongs) as contradistinction from 'Romanticism'. And as we know, Eliot has publicly announced that he is a "classicist in literature". So, when we come to examine Eliot's contributions to English poetry we have to keep in mind his artistic qualities as a classicist. First of all, Eliot remains a traditionalist throughout his literary career. As a creative writer, he follows the tradition of Sir Philip Sidney, Ben Jonson, John Milton, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, Matthew Arnold, etc., but as a sound critic he does not spare his co-travellers for their faults. Milton, Pope and Arnold have been criticized by him for their respective weaknesses. Eliot as a traditionalist or classicist accepts an always existing background, the function of which is to provide incidental symbolism to a poem. Pope in his *The Rape of the Lock* had designed the poem within the framework of a classical epic, using its accepted norms and symbols. It is in this acceptance that Pope is a new – classicist, and it is in the rejection of this that Shelley is not a classicist in his *Prometheus unbound* *Alastor* and *Mab queen*. Eliot, like Pope, accepts the value of traditional literature as his poetic world. In his monumental poem, *The Waste Land* (1922), Eliot blends European tradition with Eastern thought to provide a necessary background to the interpretation of contemporary human predicament. The basic symbolism in this poem is derived from the Grail legend, and in the last Section he employs the Journey symbol, which is well within the Christian fold.

Eliot regards 'tradition' as a substitute for the classical mythology to provide a background full of symbolism in his poetry. His sense of tradition allows due recognition of the illustrious past (which lives in the present). It intensifies the feeling of the artist, shapes the content of the poem, retains the quality of suggestiveness in it. It also attempts to eliminate excessive blurring of the object, which tended to result from Romantic usage".³ It does not require the Romantic atmosphere of mystery as found in Shelley's *Alastor*. Eliot's essays, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), is of far – reaching significance in propounding his views of 'tradition'. In order to fully understand Eliot's concept of Classicism, we are tempted to go to the scholarly doctoral dissertation titled T.S. Eliot: The Dialectical Structure of His Theory of Poetry by Fei – Pai – Lee. This sound scholar summarizes Eliot's classicism under three heads: Personality, Tradition and Orthodoxy. According to him, personality though extinct in a classical work takes the shape of individuality and enlivens it in a considerable measure. This idea is made so clear by Eliot in his famous essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent". Tradition or the sense of history should not suppress the individual talent, but should encourage it to flourish. What Eliot wants is that personality should not be allowed to intrude too much into a work of art, and that the poet is no more than a medium of expression. He thinks that the poet must remain objective, not subjective, working as a medium rather than an experience. If he concentrates on his own personality, he will be doing the same as a Romantic does. This will inevitably shift our attention from the poetry to the poet. Eliot warns us against this kind of poetic practice. He enunciates his 'impersonal theory of poetry', which forcefully lays down that the poet and the poem are two separate things.

According to him, '

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the more perfect an artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates; The

impressions and experiences which are important for a man may find no place in his poetry, and vice versa. If this premise is accepted, there will be left very little of purely personal experience in a poem. As contrasted to the definition of poetry as given by Wordsworth – that 'Poetry is a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings, recollected in tranquility', etc. Eliot offers his own definition: '

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Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality.... The

emotion of art is impersonal; Poetry has its life 'in the poem and not in the history of the poet'.

Evidently, Eliot is not interested in the personal history of the poet. Like W.B. Yeats, Eliot lays on the inner integrity of the personality. It is the work of a poet. It is due to this integrity that Eliot regards Dr. Johnson's *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, and George Herbert's *The Temple* as the testimony of their greatness. In Eliot's view, Shakespeare, Herbert and Herrick are 'major' poets for the same reason. As regards Tradition (about which we have already spoken earlier), it provides room for originality (what Eliot calls 'the individual talent'). Tradition is susceptible to 'petrification' if it is static and incapable of assimilation. It is threatened with dissolution if the new developments are odd and eccentric. It admits 'experimentation' to bring to its freedom of expression. It offers us 'the historical sense' or the sense of 'the garden meaning' in the past. The historical sense is an instrument for self discovery, for "it is an instrument for the discovery of the whole." Fei – Pai Lu thinks that orthodoxy is a part of 'the social sanction' which consists of two parts, the second being Tradition. Eliot has made this sort of bifurcation in his *After Strange Gods* (1934). Orthodoxy is contrasted to Tradition. The former is the formulated system of common beliefs, while the latter is equated with communal habits and feelings. Orthodoxy calls for 'the exercise of all our conscious intelligence', but tradition remains largely 'unconscious' and

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represents the blood kinship of 'the same people living in the same place'.

Eliot points out in his sociological studies

The Idea Of A Christian Society (193) and Notes towards the Definition of Culture (1948) –

that religion, culture and society are the main considerations of Orthodoxy. Society is a 'spiritual community', not the congregation of crowds. Culture is 'the incarnation of religion', not 'a flurry of uncoordinated activities'. Ordered society and common culture are essential conditions for the production of classics, which, for the most part, depend upon the vitality of religion. So, church and religion in a society contribute a lot to the shaping of culture. After the Augustans, wit had almost disappeared from the poetic world. Credit goes to Eliot to have revived it again. He blends in it the Augustan wit (such as Pope used it in his verse) with the Metaphysical wit (such as Donne and Crowley used it in their poetry). Eliot does not simply aim at evoking wit or provoking amusement in his poetry. Instead, he explores the serious through the ludicrous, or he makes use of levity to intensify the grim and the gloomy. This artistic device he has learnt from the Metaphysical poets. Shakespeare has also employed this device in his tragedies; for example, the grave – digging scene in Hamlet and the porter scene in Macbeth. Eliot uses wit for 'resolution' or 'integrity' in his poetry. Wit is useful for brevity and clarity in expression and for promoting 'ironic vision'. Wit is usually associated with irony and satire, and the Augustans have amply displayed it in their verse. Eliot has paid utmost attention to verbal precision, which demands a conscious choice of words and phrases and a thoughtful construction of sentences. The verbal precision needs the utmost care in making use of words and placing of words flawlessly. Eliot has hinted at it in the following lines: The poet's emphasis here is on verbal precision, which must not give the impression of stiffness or inaccuracy. Eliot's search for precision and accuracy makes room for clarity and propriety in poetry. We have already pointed out that in Eliot's concept of poetry – which is the classical concept – the poet is a mere medium of expression. Eliot has also given his views about the role of 'emotion' and the role of 'thought' in the poetic process. Eliot emphasizes the role of emotion in poetry. But how should it be expressed? It cannot be simply transmitted from the mind of the poet to the mind of the reader. It has to turn itself into something concrete – the picture of a person, place or thing – in order to convey effectively the same emotion in the reader. And the picture of a person, place or thing into which emotion is thus bodied forth becomes its 'objective correlative' or 'external equivalent'. Eliot makes use of the phrase 'objective correlative' in his famous essay, "Hamlet and His problems" (contained in The Sacred Wood, 1920). Eliot clarifies how emotion can be best expressed in poetry. He remarks: '

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that emotion such that even the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience are given, the emotion immediately evoked'. In

Eliot's view, Shakespeare was though a consummate artist in his plays, he failed in finding an 'objective correlative' to express the tortuous emotions of Hamlet. Eliot thinks that Shakespeare has superbly succeeded in conveying the raging malady in Lady Macbeth's mind by making her repeat the past actions in the sleep - walking scene in Macbeth. Critics like Eliseo and Vincent Buckley have found fault with Eliot's theory of 'objective correlative' for expressing emotion in poetry. They point out that Eliot devises the formula of 'objective correlative' to avoid a direct utterance of emotion, but he complicates the issue by praising Dante for his view of life and Shakespeare for his 'emotional maturity'. These critics hold the view that it is erroneous to think that Eliot has a distrust for poetry based on emotion; for instance, Eliot holds Shakespeare superior to Ben Jonson due to the former's 'susceptibility to a greater range of emotion, and emotion deeper and obscurer'. What Eliot is concerned with is the expression of emotion in an objective way. He is opposed to the direct expression of emotion, and hence he propounds the theory of 'objective correlative'. He is concerned with art – emotion, not with raw emotion that bursts forth spontaneously. Eliot also gives his mind to the question of the role of 'thought' in poetry. The poet confronts a thought in the same way as we confront a man; he accepts or rejects it to build his artifice, to suit his poetic purpose. What comes to us is the semblance of thought, not thought at first hand, but the result of his conscious selection or rejection. According to Eliot, the poet to think is merely the poet who can express 'the emotional equivalent of thought'. Thus, what Eliot means by thought is its 'emotional equivalent'. Like 'significant emotion' serving the poetic purpose, 'significant thought' (or 'art – thought') is the objective of Eliot as a poet. If a distinction could be drawn between 'imaginal thinking' and 'conceptual thinking,' we can say that the former is the prerogative of a poet while the latter is that of a philosopher or scientist. In imaginary thinking the poet 'nothing affirmeth, and, therefore, never lieth'. The poet articulates his ideas in a state of illumined consciousness.

Further, Eliot maintains that a synchronization of emotion and thought affects the poetic sensibility. In his well-known essay, "The Metaphysical Poets", Eliot is seized with this matter. In this essay, he speaks of 'the dissociation of sensibility' as well as of 'the unification of sensibility'. By the latter phrase Eliot means "a direct sensuous apprehension of thought, or a recreation of thought into feeling".⁵ When 'the unification of sensibility' is found, as in the poetry of Chapman and Donne, the result is good poetry. Then, thought is transformed into feeling to steal its way into the reader's heart. It is the union of thought and feeling that constitutes poetic sensibility. But when the poet's thought is unable to transform itself into feeling, the result is 'the dissociation of sensibility' – a rupture between thought and feeling – and hence bad poetry. For good poetry, it is essential that thought must issue forth as sensation. According to Eliot, the Victorian poets Tennyson and Browning do not pass this test, as 'they think, but they do not feel their thought as immediately as the odor of a rose'. The poet's function is not to versify ideas but to convert them into sensations. As Eliot conceives sensibility, it is the faculty that enables a poet to respond to diverse experiences in a unified manner. In its function, it is close to Coleridge's concept of 'Secondary Imagination', which also gives form to the shrubby undergrowth of experiences in life. The noted critic, F.W. Bateson subjects Eliot's concept of sensibility to a strict scrutiny. Bateson opines that Eliot's concept of sensibility is a synonym for sensation, and if it is so how can it contain the element of thought? Bateson sees a paradox in Eliot's concept of sensibility. It would be, perhaps, in pace to draw a distinction between 'sensibility' and 'imagination'. For one thing, the faculty which shapes experience is sensibility, not imagination. Eliot's sensibility is a unifying faculty for disparate experiences. For Colridge, imagination is a reconciling agent aiming at 'recreation' after dissolving, diffusing and dissipating the material at hand. Imagination does not allow a place for memory that plays a vital role in Eliot's poetry. Eliot speaks of 'mixing memory and desire' in the beginning of *The Waste Land*. Eliot's poetic technique is consonant with the spirit of his time. Like the time itself, his technique is bare and stark, direct and unadorned. Eliot was highly impressed by the technical discoveries of John Donne. He thought that Donne's great achievement lay in his ability to convey 'his genuine whole of tangled feelings'. Like Donne and his school of poets, Eliot aimed at the 'alliance of levity and seriousness.' The use of irregular rhyme which was to Eliot's taste, was actually inspired by Donne. Eliot largely used free verse in his practice, instead of conventional metric verse, his versification is essentially 'a disturbance of the conventional'. His technique is, for the most part, allusive and suggestive. This sort of technique suits a poet of scholarly temperament. One can easily understand it when one keeps in mind the vast number of allusions and references used by Eliot in *The Waste Land*. No fewer than 35 authors and six foreign languages have been alluded to or used by him in this difficult poem. Such a technique lends obscurity and complexity to the poem. According to Eliot, this kind of technique suits the temper of the age. In his brilliant essay on the Metaphysical poets, Eliot remarks that 'Our civilization comprehends great variety and complexity', and he tailors his technique to catch up with this 'great variety and complexity of the modern age. The employment of apt images and suggestive symbols by Eliot in his poetry consolidates his technique to a great extent. Eliot had learnt a good deal from the French Symbolists, and shaped his symbolistic and allusive technique under their irresistible influence. To conclude, Eliot's contributions to English poetry are quite substantial and abiding. Among his recognisable contributions are his classical and traditional stance, his impersonal theory of poetry, his formulations of the role of emotion and thought in poetry, his concept of sensibility, his insistence on the use of correct diction and verbal precision, and his bold application of vers libre and allusive and symbolistic technique. For all these contributions, he will ever be remembered by lovers of English poetry.

6.3 T.S.Eliot's Influence in 20th Century Poetry

T.S.Eliot's contribution to poetry can be studied discussing his influence in 20th century poetry.

6.3.1 Eliot's originality

T. S. Eliot is the representative figure of

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the twentieth century. His literary career extended over a period of forty-five years. He dominated the English literary scene.

He wielded wide authority and influence. He has been considered "Pope of Russel Square." No other English poet of this century has shown such originality and versatility. His greatness as a poet is an admitted fact. He is, in fact, part and parcel of the English literary tradition. He has modified and enriched the English tradition for the benefit of the coming generation. His impact on the younger generation has been more wilder and more comprehensive than that of any other men of letters of our time.

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Eliot's influence on his contemporaries Eliot's influence has been complex and varied. He has given impetus to a number of poets to experiment with new forms. Eliot's successors owe him a special gratitude. According to G.S. Frazer, "Eliot is a craftsman who has provided his successors with new, sharp tools and as a teacher from whom they have learned how to use the tools and how to keep them clean." The contemporaries of Eliot, like Louis Macneice, C. Day Lewis, Stephen Spender, and Auden etc., show the influence of the style and imagery of *The Waste Land*. Images like, "a patient etherized upon the table" have become the common stock in trade of succeeding poets. 6.3.3 Eliot's universality Eliot was a spokesman of his age. He expressed the dominant anxieties and feelings of his age. As Kathleen Raine remarks: "It is not every poet who has taken upon himself to experience and transmute such a great weight of human life and suffering, or who has found himself compelled to be the prophet of truths so terrible." Although he is the physiuan of his age who endeavors to cure the diseased mind of modern life, yet he universalises contemporary predicament and consequently it becomes a part of the human predicament in every age and country. Dr. A.G. George remarks: "His great claim to originality consists in his recognising the artistic possibilities of the belief that anguish and sinfulness are intrinsic of human nature." so the artistic qualities of T.S. Eliot makes him a universal figure. 6.3.4 A Great Innovator of the English Language When T. S. Eliot started writing, he found English language dead. He started

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revolt against the descendant and exhausted poetry of his date. He completely broke from the thinned-out romantic tradition. As R.A. Scott James remarked: "Just as Joyce in his way, and Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf in their ways, had felt the necessity of a new mode of writing to express their inner sense of the passing show and the realities behind it, so was with Eliot." In the decadent period poetry became stereo-typed. It was remote from the living language of the people. Like Donne and Wordsworth, Eliot was a great architect of the English language who endeavored to restore it to life and vitality. His technique was to bring language into contact not only with current speech but also with European literary tradition. He made

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English language so rich that it became a suitable instrument for the expression of the complexities and intricacies of contemporary urban life. Thus he has broken from the nineteenth century tradition and given a new direction to English poetry. 6.3.5 Eliot's use of new techniques Eliot adopted and developed new techniques of communicating his views. He communicates his sense of the modern predicament by the use of conversational rhythms and imagery which he has drawn from urban life. He was a great innovator. When we consider his use of symbols, the use of implication, the use of myths as objective correlatives, his use of the mythical method for juxtaposing the past and the present in his poetry, is highly commendable in communicating his sense of the modern predicament. By the help of new techniques, he has telescoped in a few lines the whole ages and world-civilizations. His art of condensation and compression has enabled him to judge the present in its proper historical perspective. Although his new techniques cause difficulty and perplexity for the readers, yet he has given a new direction to English poetry by breaking it away from the nineteenth century tradition. T.S. Eliot's influence has crossed all the frontiers of languages and lands. His touch, to-day, is felt in poetry and criticism all over the world. No poet or critic since Coleridge has ever enjoyed such an authority and distinction. Eliot is a poet, a playwright, a critic and a publicist. In every branch of literature that he has touched, he has left the stamp of a genius. He has saved English poetry from its silly nostalgic ways and has brought back its intellectual dignity. England in the twenties got itself expressed in his poetry. His poetry presents his efforts to harmonize the personal and the impersonal in poetry. Eliot is the representative of the modern mind, keenly aware of his surroundings and its problems and of the needs of contemporary poetry, therefore, has a new way of expression, a new speech. His critical writings attempt at the correction of popular taste and offer a new way of appreciation and evaluation of literature. His plays also present a case for the revival of the poetic drama. 6.4

Revival of Poetic Drama : T. S. Eliot contribution In the Elizabethan age, drama meant poetic drama. Prose drama established itself with the comedy of manners. In the nineteenth century, English drama reached a period of decline, even though the Romantic poets tried their hand at tragedy. But the close of the 19th century saw two dramatists of great ability in George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde. But they both wrote in prose.

6.4.1 State of English Drama before Eliot

No drama of any significance had been produced in the genre of poetic drama. This was partly due to the fact that plays were written by poets who did not know the stage or by playwrights who were not poets. Attempts at reviving poetic drama failed also because the idiom employed had been a "pale imitation of Elizabethan blank verse". Furthermore there was a tendency to emphasize on parts of the play rather than consider it as a dramatic whole and, as a result there was a hotchpotch of farce, rhetoric, and melodrama.

6.4.2 Eliot's Contribution to the Revival of Poetic Drama

The revival of poetic drama had its origin in Stephen Phillip's *Herod*. The great Irish dramatists like W.B. Yeats and J.M. Synge contributed to a great extent for the survival of this literary species. It was T.S. Eliot, however, who rehabilitated poetic drama and placed it on a sound footing.

Eliot's Contribution

T. S. Eliot had well defined views on the need for poetic drama, even before he wrote plays. He understood perfectly the nature of poetic drama, how it differed from prose drama, and the problems faced by a writer of verse drama in the Modern Age. In his critical writings, he tried to break down many of the misconceptions about verse drama and stressed its superiority over prose drama and created an atmosphere favorable to the revival of poetic drama. His own plays go to show the possibility of verse drama in the Modern Age.

Themes of Poetic Drama

Eliot opposed superficial or photographic realism in choosing a theme for a play. It should also be realized that a theme which can be adequately treated by prose drama should not be taken up by poetic drama. Socio-economic issues are fit for prose dramas while poetic drama demands something more elemental-something fundamental and universal, the poignant, emotional and spiritual realities of life. Contemporary material may be used, but in a careful manner, after sifting and ordering it. His own verse plays are not concerned with the surface realities but with a deeper, inner emotional reality. He deals with the psychic struggle of the protagonist with the temptations assailing him in *Murder in the Cathedral*. In all his plays, he portrays the relevance of religion to all human activity. They are "Christian plays". As D.E. Jones remarks: "Eliot has contributed to the creation of the kind of wholeness of outlook without which poetic drama cannot be accepted as the normal mode of drama".

Suitable Verse Form

Eliot considers the use of verse no more artificial than the kind of prose employed in prose drama. Both, he says, are removed from ordinary daily speech. But, he says, for a poetic drama to be successful a verse form, the rhythms of which are closer to the spoken language, should be developed. It should be elastic enough to be adapted to the various scenes and dialogues. Blank verse was suitable to the Elizabethans but in the present age it was a handicap. The versification in *Murder in the Cathedral* marks the initial success of his experimentation. He managed to develop a suitable style for each kind of scene. But Eliot has not here created a plausible dramatic verse for general use," though it is good for the particular play. It was with *The Family Reunion*, that he succeeded in evolving a rhythm pattern close to the contemporary spoken language.

Poetry as Medium and not Decoration

Eliot stressed the functional value of poetry. Poetry is not to be enjoyed as an embellishment but to be used as a medium. Rhetoric has a definite place in poetic drama but care should be taken to employ true rhetoric and not false, i.e. rhetorical utterances which are incompatible with the concept of poetry as a medium. False rhetoric emphasizes its remoteness from the spoken language, exploits the listener's sentiments and thus destroys the dramatic detachment of the audience. Poetic images are the "objective correlative of the states of mind and should help reveal the "personality-pattern" of the characters. The implications of the theme should be worked out through poetic symbolism.

Greater Range and Effectiveness Verse drama does not limit the emotional range. In fact, the use of verse widens the appeal of the drama. The very nature of poetic expression, he says, results in the achievement of a greater depth, concentration and unity in the drama. Verse enriches drama by giving it several levels of significance which can appeal to a varied audience: State of English Drama before Eliot No drama of any significance had been produced in the genre of poetic drama. This was partly due to the fact that plays were written by poets who did not know the stage or by playwrights who were not poets. Attempts at reviving poetic drama failed also because the idiom employed had been a "pale imitation of Elizabethan blank verse". Furthermore there was a tendency to emphasize on parts of the play rather than consider it as a dramatic whole and, as a result there was a hotchpotch of farce, rhetoric, and melodrama. Revival of Poetic Drama The revival of poetic drama had its origin in Stephen Phillip's Herod. The great Irish dramatists like W.B. Yeats and J.M. Synge contributed to a great extent for the survival of this literary species. It was T.S. Eliot, however, who rehabilitated poetic drama and placed it on a sound footing. Eliot's Contribution The Waste Land: by T S Eliot - Summary and Analysis. S. Eliot had well defined views on the need for poetic drama, even before he wrote plays. He understood perfectly the nature of poetic drama, how it differed from prose drama, and the problems faced by a writer of verse drama in the Modern Age. In his critical writings, he tried to break down many of the misconceptions about verse drama and stressed its superiority over prose drama and created an atmosphere favorable to the revival of poetic drama. His own plays go to show the possibility of verse drama in the Modern Age. Themes of Poetic Drama Eliot opposed superficial or photographic realism in choosing a theme for a play. It should also be realized that a theme which can be adequately treated by prose drama should not be taken up

by poetic drama. Socio-economic issues are fit for prose dramas while poetic drama demands something more elemental-something fundamental and universal, the poignant, emotional and spiritual realities of life. Contemporary material may be used, but in a careful manner, after sifting and ordering it. His own verse plays are not concerned with the surface realities but with a deeper, inner emotional reality. He deals with the psychic struggle of the protagonist with the temptations assailing him in Murder in the Cathedral. In all his plays, he portrays the relevance of religion to all human activity. They are "Christian plays". As D.E. Jones remarks: "Eliot has contributed to the creation of the kind of wholeness of outlook without which poetic drama cannot be accepted as the normal mode of drama". Suitable Verse Form Eliot considers the use of verse no more artificial than the kind of prose employed in prose drama. Both, he says, are removed from ordinary daily speech. But, he says, for a poetic drama to be successful a verse form, the rhythms of which are closer to the spoken language, should be developed. It should be elastic enough to be adapted to the various scenes and dialogues. Blank verse was suitable to the Elizabethans but in the present age it was a handicap. The versification in Murder in the Cathedral marks the initial success of his experimentation. He managed to develop a suitable style for each kind of scene. But Eliot has not here created a plausible dramatic verse for general use," though it is good for the particular play. It was with The Family Reunion, that he succeeded in evolving a rhythm pattern close to the contemporary spoken language. Poetry as Medium and not Decoration Eliot stressed the functional value of poetry. Poetry is not to be enjoyed as an embellishment but to be used as a medium. Rhetoric has a definite place in poetic drama but care should be taken to employ true rhetoric and not false, i.e. rhetorical utterances which are incompatible with the concept of poetry as a medium. False rhetoric emphasizes its remoteness from the spoken language, exploits the listener's sentiments and thus destroys the dramatic detachment of the audience. Poetic images are the "objective correlative of the states of mind and should help reveal the "personality-pattern" of the characters. The implications of the theme should be worked out through poetic symbolism.

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the plot, for the more literary the words and phrasing, for the more musically sensitive the rhythm, and form auditors of greater sensitivity and understanding a meaning which reveals itself gradually."

His own plays on the surface incorporate characteristics of contemporary farces, comedies of manner and melodrama. On another level, however, there is an under pattern. There is a "doubleness of action" and this sense of another pattern is communicated through the phrase and imagery. Prose would be inadequate for this. Audience Response The question of communication is of absolute importance in poetic drama for there has to be both effective and immediate communication. The successful revival of poetic drama demanded a re-orientation of the attitude of people. The present day audiences, unlike their Elizabethan counterpart, did not possess a frame of mind suitable to sudden transitions from poetry to prose; they are conscious of the difference between poetry and prose. Thus the two should not be mixed together in a play. He decided that the audience's attitude could change only if they were subjected to verse from characters like themselves and living in situations and conditions, similar to theirs... "we have to bring poetry into the world in which the audience lives..., not to transport the audience into some imaginary world totally unlike its own, an unreal world in which poetry is tolerated". This condition does not apply to *Murder in the Cathedral* as the personages in it are historical and the verse form was traditionally valid in such a case. Moreover, the play was to be produced for a festival audience which would come "prepared to put up with poetry". In his other plays, however, Eliot undertook the experiment of writing poetic drama within a contemporary setting.

He demonstrated that a tradition of poetic drama could be established in the 20th century and that contemporary settings and themes can be dealt with within this literary species. He succeeded in developing a flexible verse form from the contemporary idiom, which suggests the contemporary environment. He demolished certain misconceptions about poetic drama such as the idea that a nation can enjoy only one great age of poetic drama. He emphasized that verse is the natural language of men at moments of intense, emotional excitement and expresses the deeper passions of men, and as such it has a quality of universality and permanence. Nor is the use of verse artificial if used flexibly and to suit all situations and all characters. Eliot's work is a long step forward and it has to be carried on by others, for poetic drama has to evolve by the small contributions of a number of people, each contributing a little, as it progresses towards the "unattainable ideal".

6.5 Religion, literature, and society in the work of T. S. Eliot

The "easy and natural" association between religion, literature and society, Eliot argued, had happened when society was moderately healthy and its various discourses in some relation with one another, though necessarily not always perfectly harmonious. Eliot felt keenly the value of the rare moments of "easy and natural" association between literature, religion, and society (though he noted that "many of the most remarkable achievements of culture" had been made "in conditions of disunity" [NTDC [New York], p. 71]); and he spoke with eloquence of their combination of underlying order and deliberate if controlled cultivation of differences in point of view. As Eliot recognized, the maintenance of these differences made for cultural strength; just as their collapse into one totalizing discourse made for one-dimensionality, and their proliferation into a congeries of special interests for disintegration. He also felt, however, the difficulty of realizing the ideal of a harmonious but multivalent culture, especially in the midst of the "immense panorama of futility and anarchy" which was, for him, contemporary history. The more dissolute ages of the West, including his own, were, he found, marked either by "chimerical attempts" to make art, religion, morals, culture and society synonymous, or by the isolation of each discourse to the point where it could have no bearing whatsoever on the others. "The alliances," Eliot insisted, "were as detrimental all round as the separations" (SE [1950], P- 393)-

When he dealt with these and similar issues, Eliot wrote consciously as a representative, partisan, poet and critic of the West, and later, after his conversion in 1927, as a practicing Christian. He also wrote, however, with a sense of the similar problems affecting other religious and cultural traditions as well. As he said in "The Function of Criticism," he thought of the literature of the world, of its subset the literature of Europe, and of its further subset the literature of England, "not as a collection of the writings of individuals, but as . . . systems in relation to which, and only in relation to which, individual works of literary art, and the works of individual artists, have their significance" (SE [1950], pp. 12–13). These systems were, he saw, interdependent, and all were increasingly under threat, not only from wars, unregulated market forces and the "crudities of industrialism" (SE [1950], p. 383), but perhaps even more from dissolution and anarchy. When he dealt with issues of religion, literature and society, then, it was with a full awareness of their gravity and extent, which entailed the fate of peoples and nations as well as that of individual souls. Because of this awareness of the fragility of cultures, Eliot felt the obligations not only of poets, who must reclaim, regenerate and transform these cultures, but of critics, who must evaluate, theorize, disseminate and transmit the results. In his paired essays, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919) and "The Function of Criticism" (1923), Eliot laid down what he saw as the principles and operations of this task, and established the parallels as well as distinctions between the poet and critic they entailed. In general, he insisted that all writers must recognize something outside themselves to which they owed "allegiance" and "devotion," something in the light of which sacrifices of idiosyncrasy, personality, and ideology might with justification be made. This "something outside" might be nebulous, at least for poets; it might indeed be no more than a vague sense of the exigencies of craft and the need for adequacy to a certain compelling vision. For critics, however, the nature of these allegiances must be explicit, both in order to maintain the distinctions - no longer self-evident - of particular cultural and religious points of view and in order to enable further debate and adjudication of their claims (SE [1950], pp. 3–12). Eliot did not scant or evade the issues of judgment at stake here, nor did he pretend, against a tide of evidence, that all the resulting extended points of view could be of equal merit. While he affirmed the necessity and value of a number of competing perspectives, he did not think that

these could stay forever within limits carefully designed to avoid either contact or conflict with one another. For, in order to make the kinds of claim on "allegiance" or "devotion" necessary for the preservation of a unified sensibility, each point of view had to make some pretense, at least, to an extended field of application. In doing so it had necessarily to raise broader questions, including questions of belief. While the answers to such questions must, Eliot insisted, be proximate, the questions themselves must be ultimate, and an awareness of both necessities was essential to keeping the frontiers of criticism open, permeable and yet clearly defined (KE, pp. 163–64; PP [New York], pp. 113–34). To give only one example of the kind of criticism Eliot had in mind, Walter Pater's doctrine of art for art's sake drew his attention because it was a doctrine of ethics as well as of aesthetics. Indeed, in its own domain alone it was remarkably weak, expressing either a truism (writers must be committed to their craft) or else a patent falsehood (readers must read only for aesthetic effect). The minute it became a statement about life, however, Pater's doctrine gained a cogency that at least lent it a certain dignity (SE [1950], pp. 388, 392). Eliot wished, of course, both to contest this doctrine and to demote its influence, just as he wished to do with that of the apparently opposed Matthew Arnold. He was enabled to do so, however, precisely because of the extended and generous terms of his predecessors' arguments; these at least brought ultimate questions into view. The opportunity to take up and differ from a preceding position in matters cultural and even cosmic made, in Eliot's view, for a living as opposed to a dead tradition. Without it, neither literature nor religion nor society could flourish, either on their own terms or with relevance for one another. A sense of the necessity for tackling overwhelming questions even where the answers must be proximate informed not only Eliot's study of Arnold and Pater, but his treatment of many other poets and writers as well, including Donne, Herbert, Milton, Pascal, Blake, and Baudelaire. He dealt not only with the respective philosophies, psychologies and techniques manifested by these writers but with their relations of value to one another. Eliot assessed with acuity, for instance, the aesthetic genius of Donne, but he also contrasted him critically with Lancelot Andrewes in terms of their relative usefulness as resources on which cultures and individuals might build (SE [1950], p. 302). Hence, too, he remarked on the running contrast between such catholic and cosmopolitan Europeans as Dante and Lucretius, who

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could draw imaginatively on a wide range of fully formulated

doctrinal and ethical traditions in their work, and such narrower and more parochial figures as Blake and Milton, great in their own ways, but cut off by religious divides and sectarian allegiances from the wider resources of thought and tradition by which they might have been nourished. In more general studies, Eliot tried to articulate his own theory of the distinct but related connections between literature, religion and society, and to develop a cultural criticism equal to its demands. In such essays, lectures and books as *The Clark Lectures*, *After Strange Gods*, "Thoughts After Lambeth," "Religion and Literature," and *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, Eliot struggled again and again with the difficult intersections between knowledge and experience, dogma and literature, orthodoxy and feeling, skepticism and belief, without ever achieving a solution completely satisfactory to himself, much less to his readership.³ His style was suave, his terms precise, and his tone judicious and restrained, but these virtues did not always conceal either the difficulty of the problems he faced or his own constant wrestle with words and meanings. In dealing with these problems, Eliot could often sound deceptively magisterial. "

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Literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint,"

he pronounced firmly in his essay "Religion and Literature" (SE [1950], p. 343), echoing remarks already made in "The Function of Criticism" (SE [1950], p. 9) and made again in *After Strange Gods*. In fact, however, when he tried to spell out how such "completions" might occur without violation of either literary integrity, ethical and political obligation, engaged belief or the actual experience of reading, his answers were often far more nuanced and tentative than might at first appear. Hence, if he insisted, contra the aesthetes, that the greatness of literature could not be measured "solely" by literary standards, he also insisted that whether it was literature could be measured "only" by such standards (SE [1950], p. 343). Eliot also wavered back and forth on the question of the degree to which a belief shared with a writer - or the opposite, a dissenting position - would or should dictate a reader's response to a work, trying to examine his own readings of say, Dante, or Herbert, or the *Bhagavad-Gita* with these questions in mind (SE [1950], p. 230). He found that each situation required its own solution, but that one must at least begin by making an effort to pull back from a text with which one was in accord, and a corresponding but opposite effort to surrender to one with which one disagreed (?? [New York], p. 262). Regardless of the changing state of his own personal beliefs, Eliot's basic framework for dealing with matters of religion, literature and society remained broadly sociological, anthropological and comparative (NTDC [New York], p. 69). Religion meant for him not just and not even primarily a system of beliefs but rather the sum total of the ritual, cultic, and related social practices of a given society, each of them in more or less functional relation to the others. Indeed, as Eliot put it in defining this and a number of related terms in his late work *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture*, "We may . . . ask whether what we call the culture, and what we call the religion, of a people are not different aspects of the same thing: the culture being, essentially, the incarnation (so to speak) of the religion of a people" (NTDC [New York], p. 27). This sociological definition, indebted among other things to his reading of Levy-Bruhl, Frazer, Durkheim, and others, stood Eliot in good stead both as a poet and as a critic, opening his perspective to plural points of view, yet providing him with a strong stance from which to argue the integral and reciprocal roles of language, belief and culture. Belief, for Eliot, was a more specific and more limited term, related to religion as part to whole. It meant the more or less conscious and systematic set of views and doctrines held by individuals and shaped by their experiences in communities of interpretation, views and doctrines by which they supported, rationalized and reinforced their various faiths and commitments. As he argued in his dissertation in philosophy, Eliot regarded all systems of belief as partial and subject to correction by other views; such systems, as he put it, are condemned to "go up like a rocket and come down like a stick" (KE, p. 168). Belief was accompanied for him, as Jeffrey Perl has argued, by a necessary skepticism, skepticism being "the habit of examining evidence and the capacity for delayed decision" (NTDC [New York], p. 28). The highest goal of the civilized being was, he once remarked, "to unite the profoundest skepticism with the deepest faith."⁴ This habit he regarded as a sign of maturity, but in terms of cultural and of personal development, though taken to an extreme it could be self-defeating. "We need," he pointed out, "not only the strength to defer a decision but the strength to make one" (NTDC [New York], p. 28).

This skepticism, which extended to Judeo-Christian as well as distant, non-normative and/or esoteric traditions, prepared the way for Eliot's eventual conversion, conditioning on the one hand his rejection of mystical and esoteric paths to truths as a basis for belief, but also, on the other, his sense of the limitations of agnosticism as a way of dealing with the full range of human experience. Subject to moments of mystical illumination, Eliot was tutored enough in epistemology to find mysticism an inadequate basis for systematic beliefs; educated in democratic circles, he was cosmopolitan enough to grasp the possible value of religious and political hierarchy; and, endowed with a dark cast of mind, he was wise enough to see the necessity both for recognitions of futility and for affirmations of continued struggle against it. The major principles of Eliot's thought were adumbrated in his postgraduate dissertation, a study of the late-idealist philosopher F. H. Bradley.⁵ Bradley sought with considerable success and in a glittering, indeed coruscating style to deconstruct not only all claims for a correspondence theory of truth but even many for a coherence theory as well. In his own dissertation, Eliot demonstrated to his own satisfaction why this project was, by the simple extension of its own ineluctable logic, self-vitiating unless it terminated in some sort of an "act of faith." In undertaking this act, one passed, Eliot admitted, from a strictly philosophical to another type of discourse; one undertook a "pilgrimage," a "transmigration from one world to another" (KE, p. 162). Some such passage was, however, a necessity if one were to escape from the epistemological cul-de-sac into which Bradley's explorations had led. Part of Eliot's critique of Bradley rested on his appreciation of a then recent trend in philosophy, the new realism of Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore. Though he did not embrace its perspective unequivocally, the new realism offered Eliot the basis of a firm though qualified stress on the facticity of experience, and on the necessity of affirming or denying some moment of literal and experiential truth, however provisional, outside the perceiving mind. This moment, however, Eliot saw as changing the subsequent perceptions in such a way as to render impossible a return to a previous point of view for comparison and adjudication. "Facts" in the realist sense did not, Eliot argued, come out of the blue, but were themselves a construct and were correctly discerned only by intense cultivation of the mind. Once perceived, however, they altered the perspective forever, making a return to the state of belief before their perception inaccessible to objective comparison. While he did not use the term "fact" here in quite the uncritical sense it carried for others, neither did Eliot vaporize it into an ideal construct, mere symbol or projection of the believing mind. When it comes to some things, Eliot remarked in "The Function of Criticism," "if you find you have to imagine it as outside, then it is outside" (SE [1950], p.15). The philosophical groundwork he laid down in *Knowledge and Experience* determined much of Eliot's approach not only to matters philosophical and to orthodox Judeo-Christian tradition, but to his thorough exploration of non-western and non-normative traditions and points of view as well. He had an extensive knowledge of eastern religions, especially Buddhism; several points of contact with the occult and with mysticism; and through his reading in anthropology a growing awareness of tribal cultures and the importance of their fast-vanishing legacies to world culture. Apparent to him, too, was the possibility of a kind of neo-paganism, a revival of the pagan gods that, like its Renaissance precursor, would be far deeper and more authentic than a mere donning of new fashions. Eliot saw that some such neo-pagan stance, especially when able to draw from anthropology and folklore on a much wider pantheon than the old Greek and Roman one, might offer considerable resources for a revitalized poetry, and he recognized the partial fulfillment of this possibility in such work as that of Pound, Yeats and to some extent even Lawrence, whose work he held in great respect as well as deep distrust (cf. ASG, *passim*.) Buddhism attracted Eliot for its profound recognition of the pain inevitably associated with human desire, and its insistence that all merely personal self-identity is constructed upon lack, and has no essential subsistence except as a provisional, sometimes enabling, though often blinding illusion. This interest in Buddhism, especially intense during his years of graduate study and again about the time of writing *The Waste Land*, did not end with Eliot's formal conversion to Christianity in 1927, but persisted throughout his adult life and deeply colored his treatment of religious themes, dogmas and iconography in his plays and in *Four Quartets*. As late as *The Dry Salvages* Eliot was still musing on "what Krishna meant," and on the way in which "people smile and smile, but the agony abides" (DS, 11). The use of the word *abide* in this line, so dark in its context, yet so deeply a part of Christian devotion and consolation (through the wide dissemination of the beloved hymn "Abide with Me") is characteristic of Eliot, for he often shadowed and sharpened Christian affirmations by means of this subtle and almost subliminal juxtaposition with a Buddhist negative way.

That Eliot did not "become" a Buddhist, a devotee of Robert Graves's pagan goddess, a Hindu or even (like Ezra Pound, Irving Babbitt, and I. A. Richards) a Confucian, was due to the pragmatism and sophistication with which, after his philosophical investigations, he tended to treat all such decisions. "After a year or two spent in the mazes of Patanjali's metaphysics," he remarked, speaking of one of the more major and more difficult Eastern texts, "... I came to the conclusion . . . that my only hope of penetrating to the heart of that mystery would lie in forgetting how to think and feel as an American or a European; which, for practical as well as sentimental reasons, I did not wish to do" (ASG [London], p. 34). The emphasis on the practical, cultural, and linguistic issues at stake in such matters of belief is typical of Eliot, as well as the suavity of tone with which he declined invitations which, had he accepted them, would have changed the direction of modern literature. Even after his decisions in these matters were essentially made, however, Eliot remained in some sense in touch with the possibilities he had forgotten. Four Quartets for instance is in some respects a great poem of Buddhist wisdom, able to render extremely subtle concepts such as that of sunyata or divine emptiness in such memorable images as the lotos rising from the empty pool. At a different and perhaps less intellectually engaged level, Eliot was also sensitive to occult and mystical resources for art though he treated these with the same philosophical caution evident in his dissertation. Susceptible himself to paranormal experiences and to accounts of them in such writers as Poe, Kipling and Yeats, Eliot could not help being attracted to a domain that might enrich his poetry and also account for much of his uncanny sense of the world, even while he was perfectly well able to debunk it's cruder and more obscurantist manifestations. Madame Sosostriis in *The Waste Land* may have had a bad cold and an equivocal relation to her clients, but she could still produce a genuine frisson. Those who felt able to walk exclusively by their own internal lights Eliot attacked with a fiercely Buddhist astringency, noting that the proponents of *The Inner Voice* ride ten in a car to a football match, listening to "the Inner Voice," which breathes the eternal message of "vanity, fear and lust" (SE [1950], p., 16). Nevertheless, a genuine uncanniness and sense of esoteric illumination hovers over the "third who walks always beside you" in *The Waste Land*; and a later poem, *Little Gidding*, offers an unforgettable semi- esoteric encounter with a "compound ghost," part spiritual master, part deep self.

Eliot explored the writings of the famous mystics with more respect than those of the occultists, but with something of the same critical reserve. His undergraduate readings in William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, on which he took the careful notes that have provided so fascinating a record of his early interests, were supplemented throughout his life with studies of saints' lives and writings, devotional manuals and textbooks on meditation and contemplation, especially the work of St. John of the Cross.⁶ Here again, the range of his reading was consistently cross-cultural; *The Clark Lectures* of 1926, for instance, make several allusions to the similarities and differences between western ways of illumination and those advanced by Patanjali, author of the *Yoga-sutras*. Eliot was later to mention both the studies of Abbe Bremond and those of the eccentric but interesting French practitioner of Zen, Hubert Benoit, as of particular interest (PP [New York], pp. 115-16; UPUC [London], pp. 137-40). All of these readings and no doubt many experiences of his own lay behind the vivid renditions of mystical moments in Eliot's poetry, the moment in *The Waste Land* where "I could not / Speak" and "my eyes failed . . . / Looking into the heart of light, the silence" (I) or the climax of *Little Gidding* where "the fire and the rose are one" (V). Here again, however, Eliot saw a contradiction that made him unable to accept mysticism tout court as an adequate system of belief or even an ineluctable guide to life. As his university's prestigious philosopher Josiah Royce had long taught, the experience of mysticism cannot speak for itself; it requires interpretation and translation into more normative terms, and these must be evaluated upon rational criteria, bringing us, epistemologically speaking, back to square one. From inside the experience, a mystical intuition has one set of implications; from outside, another, and no one can remain on either side of this divide for long enough to establish an unassailable position. "We had the experience but missed the meaning," Eliot would later say in *Four Quartets*, "And

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approach to the meaning restores the experience / In a different form" (

DS9 n). Eliot's awareness of tribal cultures, their religious sensibilities and their potential for art was also intense but critical, engaging him both at the intellectual and the emotional levels, but almost always with an awareness of countervailing points of view. Eliot's reading in anthropology provided him not simply with material for cross-cultural comparison but with the concrete details of cultic observances from which he constructed virtual worlds of belief and sensibility. If Eliot alluded powerfully to ritual sex, cannibalism, rain-making or the beat of a tribal drum in his

poetry, he did so in part because his reading had led him to try out these forms of religious experience, metaphorically speaking, on his own pulse, not because he sought to "excite the membrane . . . with pungent sauces" or "multiply variety / In a wilderness of mirrors" ("Gerontion"). By undertaking a serious "suspension of belief" in the presuppositions of his own culture, and by regarding these other points of view as genuinely possible, Eliot was able to explore with authenticity and conviction worlds of otherness closed to many of his predecessors and contemporaries. Although there were no doubt times when Eliot was tempted either to "go native" à la Conrad's Kurtz or to adopt a "scientific" or quasi-scientific attitude toward these worlds, he did not himself think that either approach was methodologically tenable for one in his position. As early as his graduate years, in a seminar on scientific method led by Josiah Royce, he had observed that the reasons for and functions of a fantasy or a religious myth, ritual, belief or practice were strictly speaking unknowable from a point of view either entirely outside or entirely within the experience. Arguing along the lines he had laid down in *Knowledge and Experience*, Eliot insisted that an insider's account of these phenomena would be blind in one way; an outsider's in another, and no certain third point of view could be established to adjudicate their claims. One could not know the real power of a rite unless one participated in it with full belief, and yet the immediacy of that participation and belief would alter the sensibility in ways from which there was no turning back, obviating both the question of prior origins and that of ultimate social function in the process. Because of his attraction to these mysteries coupled with his sense of the impossibility of penetrating them without a corresponding change in identity that would render their explanation in previous terms moot, Eliot's poetic explorations of anthropological material took often the form of caricature and parody, as well as of vivid rendition. To some extent, these literary modes helped Eliot handle and shape the horror, the "heart of darkness" he found at the core of all human social and moral experience. By the same token, however, it would not do to underestimate the pull on Eliot's imagination of other world-views unmediated either by scholarship, philosophical skepticism or modernist irony. He could capture like no one else, sometimes in a single phrase or cadence, a moment of alien cultic feeling, and capture it so vividly that it became the dark familiar of modes and moments closer to home. The "murmur of maternal lamentation" in *The Waste Land* (v), for instance, which was drawn from Eliot's reading about the fertility cult of Adonis, with its motifs of castration and female dereliction, resonates strongly against the poem's allusions to the sorrows of the women at the foot of the cross, creating a dissonant effect more reminiscent of Stravinsky than of a classical progression. When it came to the resolution of such dissonances into tonic chords of full-scale affirmation or belief, Eliot was in his early years almost certainly an agnostic. His poetry and his reviewing of work in comparative religion and philosophy both give ample evidence of a profound resistance not only to occult, mystical, eastern, and tribal or neo-pagan points of view but to Christian faith as well. As Robert Crawford has pointed out, poems like "Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service," "The Hippopotamus," "Whispers of Immortality" and even "Gerontion" express a radical distrust of modern religion, which seems to lack even the integrity and potency of its more sexually explicit and openly magical antecedents. In "Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service," for instance, the feet of Christ are "pale," "thin," and "unoffending," which hardly allows them to compete for attention with the great hams of Sweeney, which bespeak a persistent, unreflecting violence and sexuality, having the virtue at least of unreflective being rather than Christian attenuation (Crawford, *Savage and the City*, 116-20). Likewise, one of the most powerful statements in the Christian scriptures, "In the beginning was the Word," is reduced by the poem's clever placement and control of tone to almost complete inanition, rather the ghost of revelation than an allusion to it. In Eliot's more profound early poems, this resistance to Christianity gains force by modulating into a still skeptical but more deeply felt ambivalence. In such poems as "Gerontion,"

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the incursions of Christ into the world, though powerful, are less healing than rending, a decadent but still disruptive form of ancient cannibalistic rituals in which body and blood are all too real, all too present. "

Christ the tiger" comes in "depraved" May, "To be eaten, to be divided, to be drunk / Among whispers ... " - "Us he devours," not we him. The close association and partial inversion of incarnation and eucharist in this poem is less syncretistic than disturbing, functioning not as a matrix for but as an obstacle to the affirmation of life and creativity which the original ritual was intended to instill. Though Eliot does not here entirely reduce a complex religion to a mere reflection or belated version of a primitive cult, he does by juxtaposition

destabilize belief in either form of religious formation detached from awareness of its connections with the other. Likewise in *The Waste Land* — which Eliot later denied was a statement of complete disillusion, though it was widely so read (SE [1950], p. 230) — the juxtaposition of modern and ancient, eastern and western, tribal and urban modes of incantation and sacrifice does not suggest the modulation of one into the other in an evolutionary scheme, but rather the transgressive and problematic nature of them all, as on every side, early and late, far and near, the limits of a humane rationality are left behind in the waste land of existential extremity. The poem does indeed hint at attempts to find affirmation and faith, if only by a kind of triangulation of cultural and individual moments of transcendence and revelation. The appearance of the ghostly "third who always walks beside you," half comforter, half projection of failing minds, is an example, for it lends itself easily to Christian typology through the Biblical story of the stranger on the road to Emmaus who turns out to be Christ. Yet the text of the poem itself by no means guarantees this interpretation; rather, it poses questions and suggests oblique and deferred answers, together with the recognition, more profound than either, that an ultimate resolution would change the terms of the whole debate. A great deal of this ambivalence toward Christianity has its origins in Eliot's upbringing. His family were Unitarians, members of a Boston-based elite (though translated to St. Louis, where they felt they had a mission) with a long tradition of resistance to the more hierarchical and mystagogic forms of religious life, as well as to the rebarbative dogmas and internecine quarrels of their Puritan and Calvinist forebears. Spiritual heirs of Emerson and Thoreau, these people had struggled hard for relief from the effects of such oppressive and divisive dogmas as original sin, hell and damnation, the nature and function of the trinity, and the literal truth of the incarnation. If they tended to substitute for theological precision a certain high-mindedness and for religious zeal a certain gentility, they did not do so without reason. Above all, Unitarians did not like the thought of bowing the knee, whether to Church or to State. "Do you kneel down in church and call yourself a miserable sinner?" wrote an Eliot aunt to a friend who had just become an Episcopalian. "Neither I nor my family will ever do that!" (cited Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years*, 126).

Eliot once remarked of his family's religion that he had been raised "outside the Christian Fold," where "The Son and the Holy Ghost were not believed in, certainly; but they were entitled to respect" (cited Crawford, *Savage and the City*, p. 73). In spite of its irenic intentions, this toothless form of religion, "full of high sentences, but a bit obtuse," did not appeal to him. Even the serious attempts of the philosopher Royce to reconstruct Christianity as a kind of useful communal myth struck him only as a method of "the last resuscitation of the dead."⁸ Later, his temperamental aversion to liberal and revisionist religious views was strengthened by Harvard's anti-romantic Irving Babbitt, by the aesthetics of T. E. Hulme, and by the French intellectuals Charles Maurras, Julien Benda, and Paul Claudel, who placed a great value on the clarity and precise definition of classical theology even with respect to the deepest mysteries of faith. Eliot maintained the importance to him of these views even when he had later parted company with Babbitt, Maurras, and Benda on other grounds. In spite of his recognition of the need for ritual, in spite of the opening his philosophical skepticism had left to belief, in spite of his admiration for the rigor and authority of classical theology, and even in spite of the affirmations to the brink of which the writing of *The Waste Land* had brought him, Eliot did not experience a quick, easy or automatic conversion to Christian faith. In his essay on Pascal, Eliot described the adult convert as proceeding largely by a process of rejection and elimination. He or she finds the world to be in a certain case, Eliot asserted, finds it inexplicable by any merely secular theory, and then finds in Christianity the most satisfactory account of reality, especially with regard to darkness of "the moral world within" (SE [1950], p. 360). We may take this rather programmatic version of the route to faith cum grano salis, especially from the lips of one who apparently astounded his family by falling to his knees before Michelangelo's *Pieta* (Gordon, *Eliot's Early Years*, p. 124). Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Eliot's Christianity was long meditated and perhaps even long deferred, and came in part as the result of having arrived at a very zero sum, in morals, in epistemology and in personal affairs as well. The foundation of his final decision was then, for Eliot, less direct contact with the rock of ages than with a far more modern, more destabilized "ragged rock in the restless waters" (DS). He felt intensely the dark pre- and unconscious ironies of human existence and the necessity for dealing with them on terms adequate to their seriousness and extent. "Think," he had implored, well

before his Christian days, "neither fear nor courage saves us. Unnatural vices / Are fathered by our heroism. Virtues / Are forced upon us by our impudent crimes" ("Gerontion"). Facing this reality entailed less metaphysical argument than sheer nerve, conditioned by a persistent sense of the ineluctable facticity of human sin and error, and coupled with a recognition of the necessity to "construct" something "upon which to rejoice" (Ash-Wednesday). Any such construct must, Eliot knew, have a dimension of relativity as well as of universality, though where one stopped and the other began was the work of many lifetimes and many historical formations to discern. Sheer conviction of sin does not, however, make a Christian, or not alone; the reality of grace must be affirmed as well. This side of the equation was, perhaps, hardest for Eliot to achieve. There is no doubt that he came to believe wholeheartedly and without revisionism not only in hell and damnation, but in the more salvific doctrines, in what he called the "fact of incarnation" and the atonement and in what he took to be their corollary, the virgin birth (SE [1950], p. 361). He also believed with equally unqualified firmness in the other articles of the Anglican creed, especially — if *Four Quartets* be any indication — in the efficacy of prayer, the intercession of the Virgin and the communion of the saints (Ackroyd, T. S. Eliot[^] p. 163). These doctrines were for him precisely the kinds of truth "outside of [ourselves]" which, he proposed, every faith or committed point of view must at some point entail. Eliot was able to embrace these doctrines, so temperamentally and intellectually foreign to him in many ways, in part through the operations on his sensibility of the poetry and art of the West. His response was not to religious or devotional works per se — a category he largely distrusted — but to the great classics of his own cultural tradition, classics ranging from Virgil to Valery and from Shakespeare to Dante, regardless of their appearance of orthodoxy or lack thereof. His praises here are telling: of Baudelaire, for instance, for his understanding of the literal reality of the Satanic and its potential for revivifying that epicene Christianity of which he had complained in "Mr. Eliot's Sunday Morning Service" (SE [1950], p. 124), and of Pascal for his ability to make use of all through which he had passed, his worldliness, his philosophical training, his pain, leaving nothing behind in his leap of faith. The most important factor in Eliot's conversion as well as his art, however, was without a doubt the poetry of Dante, of which the influence on him was overwhelming, "the experience," as he said, "both of a moment and of a lifetime" (SE [1950], p. 212). Dante's work influenced Eliot not only for aesthetic reasons — though these were weighty enough — but through its view of psychosexual maturation as well (SE [1950], p. 235). In *The Clark Lectures*, Eliot made clear how deeply he had always sought for "incarnation" in the linguistic and extra-linguistic senses alike, and how closely he identified this quest with Dante's poetic and religious achievement. Dante, Eliot argued, had been given the "gift of incarnation" to a high degree, both as the recipient of the blessings of Christian faith and as the donor in turn of an articulation of these as immediate as the odor of a rose. Dante also guided Eliot toward that understanding of the close relationship between sexual idealization, collapse of that idealization and the re-establishment of eros only as mediated by realities beyond death that so informed his later life and work. The "gift of incarnation" in this Dantean sense did not come naturally to Eliot; it had to be cultivated and made his own by considerable effort. As Eliot once remarked: "Most people suppose that some people, because they enjoy the luxury of Christian sentiments and the excitement of Christian ritual, swallow or pretend to swallow incredible dogma. For some the process is exactly opposite. Rational assent may arrive late, intellectual conviction may come slowly, but they come inevitably without violence to honesty and nature. To put the sentiments in order is a later and an immensely difficult task: intellectual freedom is earlier and easier than complete spiritual freedom" (SE [1950], p. 438). The cultivation of that "complete spiritual freedom" entailed for Eliot not only continued intellectual inquiry, but, as Peter Ackroyd has rightly observed, the deliberate and conscious observance of the Christian sacraments (p. 161). Over time, this inquiry and observance did not further alienate but more deeply reconciled him to the natural order, to what he called, in "Animula," "the warm reality, the offered good." Through Christian theory and practice, Eliot eventually learned to temper his self-mortification with moderation, his detachment with compassion and engagement, and his aversion to the body with an acceptance, indeed an affirmation, of human sexuality and physicality. The effect of his new faith on Eliot's social and political views and on the exercise of that critical faculty and function he took so seriously also took time to mature, and the process was not without its problems. Needing, as was consistent with his temperament and views, to take an oppositional stance toward the ideology of the moment among the literati, he began by announcing, somewhat provocatively, in 1928 that he was "classical in literature, royalist in politics and anglo-catholic in religion" {

For Lancelot Andrewes, p. 15). He went on to qualify this statement almost immediately in context, but the qualification was not heard, nor was it helped by further excesses, most notoriously a series of ill-considered lectures on "orthodoxy" and literature at the University of Virginia in 1933, subsequently published (it was a condition of their delivery) as *After Strange Gods* in 1934. Like most calls for orthodoxy and purity, this one was directed at an aspect of himself Eliot sought most desperately to amputate or annul. When he regained his equilibrium after this period, and when history after Munich had brought home to him with a certain degree of shock the nature of his own previous blindness about current events and attitudes, he began to write a very different kind of criticism, evidenced among other things by such speculative works as

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The Idea of a Christian Society and Notes Towards the Definition of Culture.

Behind these lay not only Eliot's conviction that a society based explicitly on Christian principles was the best defense against fascism, but his unyielding opposition to the untrammelled operations of modern finance capital and to the assumption in both domestic and foreign affairs of the necessity for and effectiveness of unprincipled real-politik. Eliot developed his views on these matters in colloquy with others of like mind, intellectuals and scholars gathered together in such more or less formal organizations as The Moot and the Chandos Group.⁹ In contributing to these discussions, Eliot wrestled, and wrestled more honestly than many, with contradictions which still haunt societies historically based in the Judeo Christian tradition, the contradiction between equality and hierarchy, for instance, or that between inherited and acquired virtues, collective as well as individual. Perhaps Eliot's greatest contribution to these endeavors, and certainly the greatest witness that he had attained, by gradual degrees, something of the "complete spiritual freedom" of which he had once spoken lay less in his prose than in his poetry, where he experienced what was to him a rather unexpected blessing: that of the profound and unexpected renewal of his own inspiration. During the years of his maturity, Eliot's Christianity became the major source of his work, enabling such brilliant accomplishments as *Ash-Wednesday*, "Song for Simeon" and "Journey of the Magi," and such innovations as *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*. Christianity also generated *Four Quartets*, perhaps Eliot's greatest poetic achievement, a sustained experiment in dialogic and meditative poetry that is at once the culmination of a certain tradition in the West and the potential point of departure for a new mode. The specific religious challenge of these poems and plays, the challenge to affirm, as does Little Gidding, that "with the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling ...

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all shall be well and / All manner of things shall be well" {

LG, v) is not, Eliot knew, one to be taken lightly, either by way of acceptance or by way of rejection. Nor can the issues of belief it raises be settled once and for all at any one time, either by an individual or a collectivity. As Eliot put it in *Knowledge and Experience*, "both God and Mammon are interpretations of the world and have to be reinterpreted," and because even "the finest tact" can give us "only an interpretation," therefore "every interpretation, along perhaps with some utterly contradictory interpretation, has to be taken up and reinterpreted by every thinking mind and by every civilization" (p. 164). On the other hand, the question of "tact" is never entirely moot, at least when it comes to art. It matters, and matters greatly not only that the poet of these works had made up his mind on certain issues, but that the voices he summoned into being expressed the convictions of other and different minds too, and that he was able to give powerful articulation to skepticism as well as belief, to individuality as well as tradition, and to the points of view of many cultures and times as well as those of his own. Aesthetic achievement of this order requires primarily neither dissent nor endorsement but rather something of what Eliot himself, speaking of Dante, tentatively termed "poetic assent" (SE [1950], p. 288). This assent, Eliot argued, entails less a "suspension of disbelief" than a "suspension of belief" (SE [1950], p. 220), a mobile receptiveness and attention that moves beyond though it is not indifferent to matters of faith and doctrine. Such assent is possible, Eliot knew, only when prompted by art that is respectful of its audience, uncoercive in intent, and deeply in touch with the concrete realities of human existence. Eliot's art was of this order, and it is compelling not only for the ultimate questions it raises and the proximate answers it suggests, but for its power to intensify the very terms of their debate to a greater and more generous order of magnitude.

6.6 Unit Summary

T.S. Eliot exercised a strong influence on Anglo-American culture from the 1920s until late in the century. His experiments in diction, style, and versification revitalized English poetry, and in a series of critical essays he shattered old orthodoxies and erected new ones. 6.7

Key Terms Classicism and Romanticism are literary movements. The term Classicism refers to the admiration and imitation of Greek and Roman literature, art, and architecture. Order, maturity, harmony, balance and moderation are important qualities of Classicism. The term Romanticism might best be described as anti-Classicism. 6.8 Check Your Progress 1) Discuss Eliot's contribution to poetry elaborately. 2) Discuss Eliot's Influence in 20th Century Poetry. 3) Eliot's Contribution to the revival of poetic drama.

Unit 7: T.S. Eliot's Essays and other Works Related to the Play Structure 7.0 Objectives 7.1 Introduction: Life and Works of T.S. Eliot 7.2 Dramatic Experiments: Sweeney Agonistes and The Rock 7.3 Eliot's essays relevant to his plays 7.4 Eliot's Poetic dramas 7.5 Exercises 7.0 Objectives This Unit will familiarise you with T.S. Eliot's: a) Life and works b) Dramatic experiments: Sweeney Agonistes and The Rock c) Essays relevant to his plays; and his d) Poetic dramas 7.1 Introduction: Life And Works Of T.S. Eliot Thomas Stearns Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on 26th September, 1888. William Green Leaf Eliot (Eliot's grandfather from his father's side) was one of the earliest Eliot settlers in St. Louis. He was a Unitarian minister. Unitarianism arose in America in the mid eighteenth century as a wave against Puritanism and its beliefs in man's innate goodness and the doctrine of damnation. Unitarianism perceived God as kind. In 1834 William Green Leaf Eliot established a Unitarian church in St. Louis. He was also instrumental in setting up Washington University there. Of the fourteen children born to William Green Leaf Eliot and his wife, only four survived. Henry Ware Eliot, Eliot's father, was the second of the surviving children. He graduated from Washington University and worked for a grocery business for a short while. Later, he joined a brick making firm of which he eventually became the chairperson. In 1869 T.S. Eliot's father, Henry Ware Eliot, married Charlotte Champe Stearns who was a school teacher in St. Louis. She was involved in social work and advocated women's rights. T.S.

Eliot was the youngest of the six children born to Henry Ware Eliot and Charlotte Champe Stearns. The first four were girls and nine years separated Thomas and his brother, Henry. T.S. Eliot's mother was profoundly influenced by her father-in-law, William GreenLeaf Eliot. She raised her children according to his values. He was a strong believer in self denial and public service. When T.S. Eliot was sixteen his mother

published a biography of William GreenLeaf Eliot and dedicated it to her children, "

Lest They Forget. T.S. Eliot started school late - at the age of seven or eight - because he was a sickly child suffering from "congenital hernia." Eliot went to a school in St. Louis until 1905. Later, he went to Miller Academy at Massachusetts for a year. He joined Harvard at the age of eighteen. By the time Eliot was in Harvard he had broken away from the strong Unitarian influence at home and had become indifferent to the church. While at Harvard from 1906-1910 Eliot began writing. In 1908 Eliot

read Arthur Symons book, The Symbolist Movement in Literature which introduced him to the poetry of La Forge. From La Forge Eliot learnt to confess through voices and to dramatise irrational thoughts. He was struck by Symon's call for a spiritual vision to eclipse the realistic tradition. It was in a student magazine, The Harvard Advocate that Eliot published his first poems at the age of twenty. Later, Eliot said that the form he adopted in 1908 and 1909 was directly derived from his study of La Forge as well as from Elizabethan drama in its later phase. Between 1909-1912 Eliot wrote a group of poems, later published in the collection, Prufrock and Other Observations. These poems dealt with the "New Boston" of Eliot's youth. Unlike the "old Boston" of Puritan values with which Henry James was associated, Eliot's Boston was decadent and corrupt. It was very unhealthy, highly commercialised with an influx of immigrants. Failing to find life among equals Eliot went into slum areas. He deliberately moved in squalid places. His poems pick up the images of "cigarettes butts," "broken glass" "dirty windows" etc. "Preludes" written about 1910 picks up several sordid images. St. Louis had been a peaceful phase in Eliot's life. In a certain way, the move from St. Louis to Boston had changed Eliot. In his last year at Harvard Eliot wanted to get away from his life there, and his family's persistent questions about his career. He went to Paris. Through Symons, Eliot had already developed an interest in French poetry. While at Paris, Eliot attended several lectures by the French philosopher Henri Bergson at the College de France. By February 1911, Eliot was disillusioned with Paris. He felt the city was drab like

London. Many of his poems pick up the drab appearance of modern cities. In 1911, Eliot returned to Harvard and entered graduate school in Philosophy. In 1913 he had become the President of the Philosophy Club. A year later, in 1914, while Eliot's doctoral thesis was still incomplete he went to Oxford on a travelling fellowship to study Aristotle for a year under Harold Joachim, at Merton College. The first world war broke out in 1914. Eliot took up a school teacher's job at High Wycombe Grammar School at Oxford to supplement his income. Eliot met several important literary personalities in England. An introduction from Conrad Aiken had led him to meet Ezra Pound. In 1916, Eliot met Clive Bell and through him the Bloomsbury group. Eliot's stay in London was important in his life for another reason too. It was here that he met Vivienne Haigh-Wood whom he later married. They were both twenty six when they met. In 1917 Eliot gave up teaching and entered the foreign department of Lloyd's Bank where he worked until 1925. In 1921, Eliot wrote the draft of his most famous poem *The Waste Land*. The poem was edited by Pound and published in *The Criterion* in 1922. The year 1927 was a turning point in Eliot's life, in that, it was in this year that he became a British citizen and also joined the Anglican Church of England. He was drawn to the Church of England because Anglicanism acknowledges that the truth of the scriptures is only dimly traced and must be verified by individual judgement. Of course, Eliot's growing attachment to the English past was yet another reason for joining the Church. At the time of Eliot's conversion he was 39 years of age. In his preface to *For Lancelot Andrewes* Eliot stated that he was "

a

Classicist in literature, Royalist in Politics and Anglo-Catholic in religion."

After 1927 Eliot'

s poetry was different. Although the first phase of his poetry also talked of the spiritual world implicitly, in the second phase - after his conversion - his poetry became more religious. Poems like "Journey of the Magi," "A Song for Simeon" and "Ash Wednesday" express this. In this same group of religious writings also fall *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Rock*. Much Later, in 1939, Eliot published his essay on the idea of a Christian Society to communicate his views on the subject of religion. Eliot returned to America in 1932 for the first time (since a brief visit in 1915) to lecture at Harvard and Virginia.

These lectures were later

published

in

The Use of Poetry and The Use of Criticism

and *After Strange Gods*.

Around this time Eliot was also developing an interest in drama. Of course, he had earlier helped in publishing his mother's long dramatic poem, *Savonarola* and in 1920 was persuaded by Pound to translate the *Agamemnon* by Aeschylus. The year 1933 was a difficult year for Eliot. He left his wife Vivienne Haigh-Wood. Her neurotic, sickly condition which started a

few months after their marriage made it impossible for Eliot to continue with the marriage. Vivienne died in 1947 in an asylum. Several years later in 1957, Eliot met Valerie Fletcher and married her. Eliot was happy in this marriage. In 1936, three years after Eliot left Vivienne, his second collected poems appeared containing the first of the Four Quartets "Burnt Norton." With *The Four Quartets* (1935-1942) Eliot reached the peak of his historical, spiritual works. Since then, he seems to have devoted himself above all to dramatic poems and to essays in Social and Christian philosophy.

Five plays followed *Four Quartets*:

Murder in the Cathedral (1935),

The Family Reunion (1939), *The Cocktail Party* (1949), *The Confidential Clerk* (1953)

and *The Elder*

Statesmen (1957)

In 1948

Eliot was awarded

the order of merit and the Nobel Prize for literature.

He

died in London in 1965 and as desired by him, his ashes were buried in the village of East Coker in England from where his ancestor Andrew Eliot had emigrated to America. On his grave is a plaque saying, "In my End is my Beginning." 7.2.

Eliot's Early Dramatic Experiments: Sweeney Agonistes and The Rock Sweeney Agonistes: Fragments of an Aristophanic Melodrama Sweeney Agonistes is a long poem in dramatic form. It was first published as two fragments. The first, "Fragments of a Prologue" was published in the New Criterion of October 1926 and the "Fragment of an Agon" in January, 1927 under the general title of Wanna Go Home Baby?. The title picks up the language of the English pubs in the 1920s. Sweeney Agonistes contained two epigraphs from Aeschylus' Choephoroi and St. John of the Cross pointing to the Greek and Christian focus of the work. The first one dramatises the hero's haunting by the furies. The second refers to the soul's need to divest itself of the love of created beings. Both these themes appear in Murder in the Cathedral. When the fragments were published in 1932 in a book form, the two epigraphs were retained but the title had changed into, Sweeney Agonistes : Fragments of an Aristophanic Drama. By combining Sweeney with Agonistes Eliot was trying to interface Milton's Samson Agonistes with Sweeney's situation in modern times. Samson Agonistes is in exile in an alien world, who brings that world down around his own head to destroy evil. Sweeney is also a spiritual exile in an alien world and he too destroys part of himself in attacking the world. Eliot's readers are familiar with Sweeney who has been used in several contexts to suggest man at his most elemental level. In a sense the play is a commentary on the postponement of religious awakening in modern times. The world to which the audience of Samson Agonistes would return to was world war shocked London but seen through the eyes of the "sensational press." The view of humanity is like reading News of the World, a Sunday weekly, which catered to popular taste. In the early twenties, News of the World specialised in graphic accounts of crimes in Britain at that time. Sweeney Agonistes has been called "Aristophanic" in the sense that it combines comic surface satire with the ritualistic celebration of birth and death. It is melodramatic in the sense that it uses music hall tradition and flat characters, inflated emotions and overdramatised situations. Interestingly, although the Sweeney fragments had a title of their own, Eliot felt that they could not really stand alone. When he gathered his poems together for the Collected Poems volume 1936, he placed Samson Agonistes in a section called "Unfinished Poems" and it still remains in that state today. Sweeney Agonistes is based on life in modern times. Doris and Dusty are two lower middle class London prostitutes. When the dramatic poem begins Doris and Dusty are debating about whether they should invite Pereira - the one who pays the rent for the apartment - to the card party that they are giving that night. They decide not to invite him, because he can't be trusted. When the phone rings Doris and Dusty panic because they know who the caller is. Dusty informs the caller Pereira, that Doris is sick and can't attend to the phone. Pereira insists. His insistence in meeting Doris and Dusty suggests his identity as a spiritual pursuer. These people are viewed negatively in Eliot's works because they can't accept the agony of purgation. At the party two other characters show up "Cap" Horsfall and "Loot," Sam Wauchope with their former war friends Klipstein and Kruinpacker-American business men visiting London. The party is fraught with doubt and distrust as the card game continues. We get a foreboding of death and violence. The party guests decide to go to a nearby pub. Sweeney Agonistes is the pub keeper. Unlike the other characters, Sweeney is not a flat character. He introduces the dimension of tragic horror into the world of Dusty and Doris and others. He heightens their feelings of distrust by narrating a story about the murder of a girl. Slowly all leave the pub with the exception of Doris and Sweeney asks her "Wanna Go Home Baby?" She goes back home with him and is later found murdered in a bath fulfilling the forebodings of the card game. Later, Sweeney too is discovered murdered. Sweeney Agonistes may have been the first dramatic venture by Eliot but it is an important experiment: a) It is the first dramatic version of the theme of spiritual pilgrimage, a recurrent theme in his plays. b) It introduces contemporary rhythms and diction into poetic drama. Jazz and telephonic conversations are used. This is in keeping with Eliot's beliefs that the new drama should combine poetry with entertainment. In the 1920s in England, a popular mode of entertainment was the vaudeville. It was here that Jazz was heard. He also felt that Jazz was an important art because it still kept a social unity in the relationship between the performers and the audience that had disappeared in other forms of dramatic art. Jazz had a special appeal to Eliot because it not only symbolised the superficial elements of a modern materialistic society but it also touched the primitive side of man's nature in its throbbing rhythms., c) It stresses the agony of saints. d) It introduces a chorus to voice communal feeling and deals with one of his central themes - that of spiritual conflict and growth in an exceptional human being and its relations and repercussions in

the lives of ordinary people. Relationships are worked out in terms of spiritual awareness. The Rock This was a pageant play which opened on May 28th, 1934 at Saddler's Wells Theatre, London. It was written to raise funds to build new Anglican churches for the growing suburbs. The theme of the pageant is the building of the church. Eliot was writing under the direction of E. Martin Browne whom he had already met in 1930 when he was staying with Bishop George Bell at Chichester. The play's versification is modelled on the medieval English play Everyman. For form he was indebted to Greek tragedy. The scenario for the pageant was outlined for Eliot by Browne and Webb-Odell. In his essay, The Three Voices of Poetry Eliot states that he merely filled in the words. When Eliot published his poetic collections, he included only the choral passages of The Rock. The play opens with the Chorus lamenting the temporal order gaining ascendancy over the spiritual. In modern times, the church is seen as having a limited value. A group of workers enter and point out that building a church is a different experience from building a bank. There is a certain commitment that is emotional which goes with the former. The Saxons enter at this point and explain the history of Christianity and its introduction into England. The Chorus reminds the congregation of contemporary times to keep the flag of Christianity up by building churches. Soon we come to know of the various challenges facing the church. For one, the land given for church building is not good. For another, a Marxist comes and creates an uproar by stating that the funds given for Church building should go into building homes for the needy. We are also reminded about the Danish invasion of England and the persecution of early Christians. Hearing about all this the Chorus almost falls into despair but the character, Rock, brings them out of it by pointing to the power of 'the eternal over the temporal. In the final scene, the construction of the church is shown as completed, throwing light upon darkness. Eliot was involved with some aspects of this play's production as he was with all his later plays. Importance of The Rock as a Dramatic Experiment Although, in his Three Voices of Poetry, Eliot stated that the Chorus in The Rock did not have any voice of its own. the Chorus in this work is important. a)

The Chorus consists of seven men and ten women wearing half masks to emphasize their "impersonality."

The "Rock" is a character. The Chorus was trained and coordinated by Elsie Fogerty, principal of the Central School of Speech and Drama, and her colleague, Gwynneth Thurnburn. b)

The Chorus is both a vehicle of social commentary and a dramatic instrument for piercing through the level of philosophic and theological implications of the

actions. c) The idea of suffering of the person who acts, the need to perfect one's will, and the conflict between eternal and temporal orders, are things seen in Murder in the Cathedral which was written a year later in 1935. 7.3. Eliot's Essays

Relevant to his Plays T.S. Eliot's essays on drama can be divided into three parts: First, the Elizabethan essays which

discuss the criteria for drama. Second, his assessment of the situation in contemporary theatre and third. Eliot's statements about his ideal of poetic drama. It is important to remember that most of Eliot's essays were written before the first performance of his first play. Only a few were written after he had established a reputation as a dramatist.

Shakespeare is a central focus in Eliot's essays on the Elizabethans. He recognised Shakespeare's genius and he found his use of the blank verse particularly innovative. Shakespeare's verse rhythms picked up the colloquial speech of his age. In The Music of Poetry (Glasgow: Jackson, 1942), Eliot states that "Shakespeare did more for English language than any other poet adapting

drama to colloquial speech." Shakespeare's verse rhythms, he argues, reflected a world in which reality was not fragmented. But, Eliot remarks, that in the formless nature of modern age, Shakespeare's verse rhythms do not apply. In *The Waste Land* Eliot had stated that writers after Shakespeare should evolve their own-verse styles instead of imitating Shakespeare. The failure of verse drama in the nineteenth century, Eliot argues, was because their verse rhythms were not tied to colloquial speech of the time. His views on this subject are expressed in his book *Poetry and Drama* (Cambridge, MA : FI HP, 1951). About Eliot's own struggles to get away from Shakespeare he discusses in his essay, "The Need for Poetic Drama." (Listener 16-411, 25 Nov. 1936 : 994-995). Apart from his comments about the Elizabethans, Eliot also wrote several essays assessing the state of contemporary theatre. One of the major problems in contemporary theatre Eliot states in "A Dialogue on Poetic Drama," (Eliot Selected Essays 31-45) was the fact that unlike the Elizabethan and Restoration periods (or even earlier), where there was a moral code that the dramatist shared with the audience, in the modern age there was no such moral code. This distanced the modern dramatists from their audience's sensibilities. Moreover, the fact that the standard modern plays were made for the actors, Eliot felt, made it difficult for poetic drama to be effective. In his essay on "The Duchess of Malfi : and Poetic Drama," (An and Fetters 3.1 Winter 1919/20 : 36-39), he says, "the successful presentation of a poetic play like Webster's or Shakespeare's demands that the actor not try to improve or interpret the script - rather, that he efface his personal vanity. While advocating the need for a poetic drama in modern times, Eliot stated that "A new dramatic literature cannot come about until audiences and producers can help poets write for the theatre ("Audiences, Producers, Plays, Poets" New Verse 18 Dec. 1935 : 3-4). The actor, Eliot said, should be selected and trained early for the purpose of speaking verse drama. Similarly, "Poets who write for the stage cannot simply learn about the theatre and fill scripts with poetry: they must learn to write a different kind of poetry, in which the implicit speaker is not the poet himself- as is the case with ordinary poetry - but someone else" ("The Future of Poetic Drama." [Journal of British Drama League, London] 17, Oct. 1938 : 3-5). Eliot was at pains to point out that poetry should not be merely ornamental in drama and that style and matter should be suited to each other in poetic drama. He says : "Good poetic drama is not simple a play translated into verse but rather a play wholly conceived and composed in terms of poetry, embodying a pattern like that of music" (*Poetry and Drama* Cambridge, MA : HUP, 1951). For Eliot the highest aim of poetic drama is to bring us to the border of those feelings which can be expressed only in music without leaving the everyday world of dramatic action. The reason why Eliot found poetic drama important was because he believed that "Poetry is the natural medium for drama, providing the intense excitement that the abstractions of a prose play cannot offer" ("The Need for Poetic Drama," Listener 16- 411, 25 Nov. 1936 : 994-995). Eliot credits Yeats and the Abbey Theatre for the revival of the genre, in Eliot's view, Ibsen, Strindberg, and Chekov were good poets who were constrained by the limits of prose. He also believed that if modern dramatists used verse for their works the mundane world would be transformed, giving meaning and order to its chaos. Eliot's Other Essays Relevant to his Plays a) "Tradition and the Individual Talent" This essay has raised great debate and controversy. In it, Eliot says, that the contemporary reader praises "a poet, upon those aspects of his work in which he least resembles any one else." Eliot protests against such an approach to literature. He argues that it arises from a misunderstanding of the concept of originality. For Eliot, the best part of a poet are those parts where his predecessors "assert their immortality most vigorously." What Eliot means here is that when a poet goes by a past tradition, his individuality is shown more through the unique manner in which he incorporates something which is of the past tradition to his work which is of contemporary value. Hence his statement, "[a new work of art is not] merely valuable because it fits in; but its fitting in is a test of its value. b) "The Three Voices of Poetry" Eliot describes the three voices of poetry as follows: 1. "The first voice is the voice of the 7061 talking to himself - or to nobody." 2. "The second voice is the voice of the poet addressing an audience, whether large or small." 3. "The third voice is the voice of the poet when he attempts to create a dramatic character speaking in verse; when he is saying, not what he would say in his own person, but only what he can say within the limits of one imaginary character addressing another imaginary character." Eliot adds that "The distinction between the first and the second voices ... points to the problem of poetic communication; the distinction between the poet addressing other people in either his own voice or an assumed voice ... points to the problem of the difference between dramatic, quasi- dramatic and non-dramatic verse."

7.4. Eliot's Poetic Dramas a) *The Family Reunion* was published in 1939. This play is based on the Greek myth of Orestes, but transformed into a contemporary setting. Orestes was pursued by the furies for the murder of his mother. Here there is no real murder, only the suggestion that for the Christian to contemplate a curse was to commit it. b) *The Cocktail Party* published in 1949 was written for the Edinburgh festival. The play may appear to be a comedy but beneath its humour lies the decadence of any large city in a disillusioned age, like the modern age. c) *The Confidential Clerk* written in 1954 was inspired by Euripides' *ION*. The story has a complicated plot and is set in modern times. d) *The Elder Statesman* (1958). In this some of the themes of Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus* are transformed into a modern setting. The play was performed at the 1958 Edinburgh festival. 7.5 EXERCISES What were the important influences on Eliot's life that had an impact on his works?

a)

Give an account of Eliot's views on Poetic Drama. b) Understanding key concepts: What is Eliot's notion of Tradition and the Individual talent. What are the three voices of poetry that Eliot talks about in his essay by the same name? c) What are the titles of the plays written by Eliot? What strikes you as significant in these titles? d) Write a note on the significance of Eliot's early dramatic experiments: *Sweeney Agonistes* and *The Rock*

Unit 8 Background, Production And Performance History Structure 8.0 Objectives 8.1 Historical background to the play 8.2 General summary of the play 8.3 Production History of *Murder in the Cathedral* 8.4 Explanation and Critical comments of the lines from the 1st Choric entrance upto Becket's arrival in Part I of the play. 8.5 Exercises 8.0 Objectives The aim of this unit is to acquaint you with the a) Historical background to the play, b) Production History of the play : and to provide c) Explanatory comments of the lines from the 1st Choric entrance upto Becket's arrival in Part I of the play. 8.1 Historical Background to the Play George Bell, Bishop of Chichester saw *The Rock* and admired it. He asked Eliot to write a play for the Canterbury festival of 1935. *Murder in the Cathedral* was a product thereof. The play premiered in 1935 and was directed by E. Martin Browne. Interestingly, it was the wife of Martin Browne who gave the play its present title. Eliot had considered calling the play *Fear in the Way*. The play deals with the martyrdom of Thomas Becket-one of the greatest of English saints - who was the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1162-1170. He was murdered in his own Cathedral by knights who claimed to be loyal to the king. For his historical source, Eliot used the eye witness accounts of eleven monks who wrote down their versions of the murder at Canterbury. Since *Murder in the Cathedral* is not a chronicle play, Eliot offers little about the constitutions of Clarendon or the coronation ceremony which created the rift between Henry II and Becket. The year of the composition of the play (1935) is also important because in Europe there was a

lot of tension building up which finally erupted in World War II. 8.2 General Summary of the Play CHARACTERS: A Chorus of Women of Canterbury Three Priests of the Cathedral A messenger Archbishop Thomas Becket Four Tempters Four Knights Attendants SETTING: The first scene is the Archbishop's Hall ,on December 2, 1170. The second scene is in the Cathedral, on Dec. 29,1170. General Summary: The play begins in early December, 1170 with the Chorus, which comprises of the poor women of Canterbury. They fear something terrible is going to happen with the return of Thomas Becket - Archbishop of Canterbury - from exile. The Archbishop was returning after seven years of exile in France (1164-1171). Disagreements with his friend and King, Henry II over the authority of the church vis-a-vis the state had led Becket to his exile. Earlier, as Chancellor, Becket was on the King's side. However, when he was also made into an Archbishop by King Henry II (in the hope that the church and state could function together under the king's control), Becket made it known to the king that his loyalties were first to God and only then to the King. The priests are confused about the way the state is run without the guidance of the Archbishop's authority. A messenger arrives and states that Becket is returning from France. The priests get curious about the terms of his return. They feel that even if Becket's return is a "patched up affair" with the king it is better for the people than his absence for the past seven years. Becket enters in a peaceful way yet aware of the dangers involved in his return to Canterbury. Soon four tempters come to tempt him. The first tempter, tempts Becket with the time in his past when he was friends with the king. He tells him to go back to those days and forget about his spiritual intensity. Becket overcomes this temptation, which he considers as no temptation because it comes " twenty years too late." The second tempter comes and tempts Becket with the time when he was the Chancellor to the king and enjoyed secular and political powers. He tells Becket that real power is in this world and not in the next. Becket turns away from him too. The

third tempter is a little different. He tells Becket to team up with the Church and the Barons against monarchy. Becket overcomes this temptation saying, "no one shall say that I betrayed a King." Becket finds the temptation of the fourth tempter most difficult to overcome. He is an unexpected visitor. He tempts Becket with his own pride the pride of achieving martyrdom. Thomas tells him "who are you tempting with my own desires?" It is after this last temptation that Becket almost sinks into despair: "

Is there no way, in my soul's sickness,/ Does not lead to damnation in pride?"

The Chorus in part I reflects the sick nature of the state. The tempters talk about the unreality of humankind and even the priests begin to fear Becket's strong position. Part I ends with Becket rising above it all. He places himself in God's hands and becomes more clear about the nature of his struggle and what he should do. The Christmas sermon is a prose interlude. In it Archbishop Becket talks of Christian paradoxes relating to birth and death and sets the stage for his own martyrdom. Part II begins with the Chorus in a more optimistic mood. The priests are still waiting for the eternal pattern to emerge. The four knights come from France claiming that they have urgent business with the King. They accuse Becket of ingratitude to King Henry II who made him the Archbishop. This ingratitude is expressed in Becket insisting on the power of the church over the state. Becket politely defends himself against these accusations arguing that loyalty to God does not imply disloyalty to the King. The knights ask Becket to leave England but he refuses saying that he has the sanction of the Pope in Rome. Becket leaves and the Chorus talks about the church H state conflict and the tragedy that will ensue. The priests request Becket to hide in the Cathedral in case the knights return again. Becket refuses hut the priests drag him in. The Chorus prays for him. The knights return in a 'drunken state and accuse Becket of treason, disobedience and embezzlement of funds among other issues. The priests try to block their entrance hut Becket states that God will protect him. The knights murder Becket and the Chorus laments along with the priests. But they feel that the church is strenghtened by Bechet's martyrdom. The knights address the audience arguing that their loyalty to the king made them implement their act. The priests dismiss the knights as "test souls" and the Chorus praises God for making them understand the divine pattern of action through Becket's martyrdom. They ask for forgiveness for not submitting their Will to God earlier. They ask for the mercy of God and Christ and for die prayers of Becket who is now Saint Thomas.

8.3 Production History of Eliot's Murder In The Cathedral The play premiered on IS dune, il'935 at Canterbury Is fourteenth century Chapter House. This was about fifty yards from the spot where Thomas Becket was killed in M70. There were seven performances. The Canterbury productions were community affairs, With local businesses, schools, and Cathedral personnel all staking part. Robert Speaight, Who starred as Becket, describes the Chapter House: "The bridling has a certain Gothic bleakness, Which was suitable enough to the play but which somehow forbade enjoyment" (Speaight, Robert. "Interpreting Becket and Other Parts. " In TS. Elit: -A Symposium for „His 'Seventeenth Birthday. Ed. Neville Braybrooke. Freeport, NY:Books for libraries P, 1958: 70- 80. This book recounts experiences of acting in Eliot's plays). The play was directed by E. Martin Browne, who also played the fourth tempter and one of the knights. Browne 'revised Eliot's text slightly to enable the four tempters to deride up as die four knights, for production 'reasons. (George Bell, who had seen and admired The Rock commissioned the play for the Canterbury festival of Music and Drama. This festival also produces 'Other versions Of Becket's martyrdom: 'Laurence Binyon's The Young King Which depicts the reign 'Of Henry II after Becket's death and Tennyson's Bedket. Kenneth W. Pickering tin 'Drama in the „Cathedral examines the twenty year old tradition of Canterbury plays. The chapter on Murder sin „the Cathedral presents a 'basic overview of the play and details about its original performance. Other chapters examine the history and context of the play's sponsor, the Canterbury (Festival and explores the background of Modern Christian drama. Browne recalls decades 'later that to the theatre as it then was, the play was a. non- event. It was religious and so no scout or manager came. "The only English (theatre man interested was Ashley Dukes, owner of the tiny Mercury in Netting Hillgate." Stella Mary Pearce, who had also worked on The Rock designed the costumes. Since the walls of the Canterbury Chapter House were painted in cold colours, strong designs for the costumes were used. They were not always historically accurate. The Chorus in sight for the whole play, was "given garments which provided for as much variety of appearance as possible. They had unshaped robes divided vertically into two shades of green and decorated with strong patterns in deep red and blue, giving the effect of figures of early stained glass." (

E.Martin Browne The Making of T.S.Eliot's Plays Cambridge:

CUP,1969). The knights wore traditional medieval dress based on a reconstruction of the heraldry on the Black Prince's tomb of the actual murderers. Priests wore Benedictine habits and Becket wore a habit and a travelling dock. The tempters' costumes were dominated "by bright yellow colours and included a suggestion of a modern-day type of each temptation, combined with the necessary medieval flavours." (Browne, 1969). The Canterbury production was an abridged version of the text Faber & Faber first published in 1935. This was so because the original performance had to be limited to ninety minutes. The only stage property was a simple throne. The tempters entered from screens on both sides of the stage and all other entrances were through the 1 audience from the large oak doors at the back of the Chapter House. After the murder Becket's body was carried out in a procession through the audience. During World War II the play was quite popular in England and was presented in makeshift venues- cathedrals and churches, schools and an air raid shelter. In 1959 Eliot stated that he wrote the play as "anti-nazi propaganda" expressive of" the desire to save the Christian world from the attacks of rival secular ideologies." In 1970 Browne produced the play within the actual cathedral at Canterbury to mark the 800- year anniversary of Becket's martyrdom. Modern sound equipments made this possible. Eliot wrote the screenplay for George Hoellering's 1952 film version of Murder in the Cathedral and spoke the role of the fourth tempter (as an off-screen presence).

The play's performance reviews were good. Conrad Aiken wrote about the Canterbury premiere under the pseudonym Samuel Jeake, Jr. in *The New Yorker*; [It is possibly] "a turning point in English drama—one felt that one was witnessing a play which had the quality of greatness... one's feeling was that here at last was the English language literally being used, itself becoming the stuff of drama, turning alive with its own natural poetry." 8.4 Explanation and Critical Commentary of the Lines From the 1st Choric Entrance Up to Becket's Arrival in Part I of the Play PART I CHARACTERS A Chorus of Women of Canterbury Three Priests of the Cathedral A Messenger Archbishop Thomas Becket Four Tempters Attendants SCENE The Archbishop's Hall. December 2, 1170. Chorus: The play begins with the Chorus standing near the Cathedral. They are very apprehensive about Becket's return from France. As poor women of Canterbury, they have already gone through a lot of suffering yet they don't feel safe. They feel that something ominous is about to happen and they have been forced against their will to bear witness. With the passage of time from autumn to winter and the collecting and storing of apples, the New Year waits, whispering about the destiny awaiting Becket. It is almost seven years since Becket left them. He was very kind to the people and yet they feel that his return is not going to be a good sign. Whether the king rules, or the Barons rule, these women have gone through a lot of oppression. But in general, they are left alone and they prefer it. They are content doing their domestic chores. Life goes on with the merchant making his money, the labourer toiling on earth. All prefer to be unobserved; With the arrival of Becket they fear disaster. Everything is going to be upset. They wait just as martyrs have also waited. God alone knows their destiny. They claim to have seen all what they know about the future in a "shaft of sunlight." All that they can do is to wait.

Critical Commentary on the First Choric Speech The play opens at a critical moment with the unexpected arrival of Becket after seven years of exile in France. The Chorus which comprises a group of "poor women" of Canterbury and who also represent humanity in general, expresses "fear." One of the choric functions is to create the atmosphere of doom -akin to Greek tragedy. The original title of the play was *Fear in the Way*. The "fear" that the Chorus expresses in a sense also relates to the political moment of the play. Eliot wrote *Murder in the Cathedral* in 1935 when the tensions leading to World War II and Nazism was already strongly felt. The Chorus who has gathered together like the congregation attending a Christian mass use the term "wait" in its opening speech in various ways. For example, the New Year waits, Martyrs wait and the Poor Women of Canterbury wait "Waiting" is an important concept in Christianity. The "Holy Spirit" which is part of the Holy Trinity of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit appears often in the form of a breeze. If you are prepared and ready and waiting, this breeze will have an impact on you. In a sense, these Women of Canterbury are waiting without preparation like the five foolish virgins in the Bible (Refer to the parable of the ten virgins in the Gospel of St. Matthew in the New Testament of the Bible). What draws these "poor women" to the Cathedral is physical safety rather than any spiritual ties,. Ironically, although these "poor women" of Canterbury keep saying that no one "bothers about them, Thomas, does bother. The reason why the Chorus is forced to bear witness against its will is because it takes both parties to complete a sacrifice. The saint and those he saves. Those whom the martyrdom benefits must accept the fact. This is what the Chorus has to learn. They must not "deny their master." The second verse of the Chorus speech picks this up. Christ died for the sins of humanity, in order to save it. Unless human beings realize this, we are not saved and Christ's sacrifice has no meaning. The reference to the seasons in verse 2 of the Chorus refers to the temporal dimension in which human beings live a meaningless existence without any relation to the "still point" that is God. The first draft of *Murder in the Cathedral* started with this line which paralleled the opening lines of *The Waste Land* ("April is the cruellest month....") When the Chorus talks about remembering the martyrs and saints who wait and question as to who will acknowledge them, they are talking about the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels (All Hallows). When these feasts were celebrated did the people of Canterbury really remember them?. Peter (One of Christ's twelve disciples) too denied his master, Christ. In the Gospel of St. Mark— in the New Testament of the Bible— we are told that Peter stretched out his hand on fire and denied Christ. We are next given the historical background. The Archbishop is returning after seven years of exile in France (1164-1170) The Chorus' statements about being left alone to do its own things parallels *The Waste Land* where the characters do not want to be disturbed from their inertia by spring. Later, the attitude of the Chorus changes. It learns that spiritual regeneration involves sacrifice. It learns that the monotonous kind of life that they are living at the temporal level is going to be changed by Becket's martyrdom which will give their life a new meaning. Throughout this choric speech we get the feeling that the "poor women" are living at the temporal level only. They follow the linear concept of time. Statements like "What shall we do in the heat of summer" refer to their emptiness. Yet the Chorus knows that "Destiny waits in the hand of God." It is God who controls everything and not the statesmen at the temporal level. The Chorus is also very prophetic. They state that death will come from the sea. The knights who killed Becket did come from the sea across France. Compare the intuition of the chorus of having seen things in a "shaft of sunlight" with Becket's statement that they speak better' than they know. Towards the end of their speech when they mention Christ and the notion of regeneration, they are comparing Becket with Christ. A Christ like figure has to perish in every age to save humanity. By the end of the play the Chorus progresses from fear in the opening passage to glorifying God at the end.

The fluctuations of the Chorus are the true measure of Thomas' spiritual

conquest.

Conversation among the Three Priests and the Messenger following the Chorus' first speech. The first Priest says that it is seven years since the Archbishop left England. The second Priest asks what the Archbishop and the Pope can do about the conflict and intrigues between King Henry II and the French King which have been discussed in endless meetings and deferred conferences? The third Priest comments on the state of temporal government which is full of duplicity and thrives on appropriation of wealth. The first Priest wonders why people cannot remember their God in heaven and forget such violence and duplicity. Soon a messenger enters and states that the Archbishop has arrived on the shores of England and that he had been sent to prepare the Priests to welcome him. The first priest asks the messenger if the feud between the King and Archbishop-two proud men, has ended.

The third Priest wonders what peace can be expected between "the hammer and the anvil." The second Priest wants to know from the messenger if "old disputes" are at an end and whether it is "peace or war?" The first Priest is still not clear whether the Archbishop is coming with the consent of King Henry II or because of his spiritual support from the Pope in Rome and the love of the people in England. The messenger states that the Priests are right in asking these questions and that the Archbishop comes not with any consent from the king of England but with support from both the Pope in Rome and the king of France and most importantly, due to the "devotion of the people." Again, the first Priest inquires "Is it war or Peace?" and the messenger says that it is not peace but a "patched up affair." He also states that he has heard that when the Archbishop left France he told the French King "I leave you as a man / whom in this life I shall not see again." This does not augur well. The messenger exits after stating this. The first Priest fears for the Archbishop and the Church. He says that he has seen the Archbishop as Chancellor working closely with the king. People loved him but he was "always isolated." His "pride" was "always feeding upon his own virtues." He had contempt for earthly power and wanted to be subject to God alone. He ends his speech by saying that if King Henry II had been weaker or greater, perhaps things would have been different between him and Becket. The second Priest states that whatever it is, the Archbishop has returned to his people who have been waiting for a long time for him. The Priest then goes on to say that the Archbishop who is at one with the Pope and the King of France would give them orders as to what should be done. He would give them all directions. Therefore, they should welcome and rejoice his coming. The third Priest says whether the outcome is good or bad it is better that the Archbishop is coming. At least the wheel is now turning.

Critical Commentary on the Passage Summarised Above. The Priests are numbered and not named. This is significant in that they become representatives of a class. Ironically, even though the Priests stand for the Church, they lack the vision of the Chorus and discuss mundane state / church issues. Is Eliot trying to associate them with institutionalized religion? The speeches of the Priests (especially the second Priest) expose us to the historical situation in the play which is necessary for our understanding of the conflict between Henry II and Becket. However, since Eliot's play-unlike Anouilh's focuses on Becket's martyrdom, the King does not appear in the play at all. Becket's "pride" is discussed by the Priests. This is important. One of the things that Becket has to shed in his move towards martyrdom is "pride." Thomas was not born a saint. He has to get rid of his pride. The last temptation is the most difficult one. When the first Priest talks about Becket's "isolation," we have to keep in mind Kierkegaard's category of the individual as the communicator of truth. The communicator of truth can only be an individual and it can be addressed only to the individual. For truth consists precisely in that conception on life which is expressed by the individual. The crown is "untruth." Truth is subjective. This could be one reason why Becket does not even listen to institutionalized religion as symbolized by the Priests. Even when the Priests shut the door against the Knights, Becket opens them. He must bear witness. He must validate his own truth even if it personally destroys him. The messenger's description of the welcome that the Archbishop gets on arrival in England echoes Christ's triumphal entry in Jerusalem when people hailed him saying "alleluia, King of the Jews," and strewed his path with palm leaves. The messenger's remark that Becket told the French King that he would not meet him in this life again is close to the historical statement. Eliot, like Shaw in *St. Joan* is careful to use words actually spoken by the historical character wherever possible. Becket's other remark, "not if I were to be torn asunder, limb by limb would I relinquish this journey ..." makes us realize that the third temptation is really no temptation because Becket is already willing to die for the cause of martyrdom and he knows what he is doing. The second Priest's remark that we should rejoice in the Archbishop's arrival since "I am the Archbishop's man" echoes the four Knights, who murder Becket and claim to be the King's men. The second Priest is a little too optimistic. He has to learn that peace and security come through suffering. The third Priest is not so hopeful. Neither attitude is correct. Reconciliation involves

conflict between good and evil. The third Priest is important because he is the one who states the epitaph on the Knights, "Go, weak sad men, lost erring souls, homeless in earth or heaven." In the third Priest's speech the image of the wheel is also used. Unless man's will is in harmony with God's will, can the wheel turn smoothly around the still point. If this is not the case then the wheel is at a standstill. Eliot's theory of depersonalization in poetry explained in his essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" fits in with the process of martyrdom in which one surrenders one's will to God. The last few lines of the third Priest before the second choric entrance is a quotation from the Ecclesiastes, (Chapter 12, verses 3-4. Bible) which talks about the end of things. Summary of the second Choric Speech In this Choric speech, the Chorus tells Becket to return to France and leave it "to perish in quiet." It fears cataclysmic changes if Becket continues to stay in England. The time is not right as yet for Becket's return. The Chorus wants to continue to live the way it has in the past seven years. It has gone through ups and downs when crops have failed and droughts have occurred. However, it carried on with life observing the religious feasts and has seen "births, deaths and marriages." Even in these seven years these women of Canterbury have had fears of various kinds but nothing like the fear they now sense and can't face. It is a "final fear which none understands." They tell Becket that he is not aware of the implications of his return to England and its impact on their lives: "do you/realise what it means/To the small folk drawn into the pattern of fate,/the small/folk who live among small things." They plead with the Archbishop to leave and say that he will be their Archbishop even in France. Critical Commentary on the Chorus's second Speech The Chorus begins its' speech quoting from St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews in the New Testament: Chapter 13, Verse 14. Their speech is full of morbid images and colours "evil the wind," "grey the sky," "rotten the year" etc. In this speech the Chorus emerges as very selfish. It fears for itself. Later on it grows and learns to express concern for Thomas. The phrases "we do not wish anything to happen" and "Living and Partly living" echo Eliot's *The Waste Land*. These

poor women who are so poor both economically and spiritually do not wish anything to happen. They never come to grips with their lives which makes for greatness. They are also not in communion with the still point which gives one identity. They live at the linear, temporal level of time. Christ had said that "man can't live by bread alone." This is precisely what these women are doing. The empty routine of their lives is recaptured as in "East Coker" of *The Four Quartets*. There is an inner emptiness, a death march: "Silent funeral nobody's funeral for there is no one to bury." As in "East Coker" here too the poor women of the Chorus have not lived at all. They have existed only on a superficial temporal level. To the women of Canterbury "death" is frightening. This can only be so if death is not seen as part of a larger pattern. The Chorus has to learn the fact that Becket's death through martyrdom is necessary for their birth. What the Chorus fears is beyond their comprehension. In this second speech of the Chorus we see a change in it. It recognises its own guilt "tarnished frame of existence." When the Chorus states: "Archbishop, secure and assured of your fate," they have fear and no understanding of what is to befall them. It is important to note that the Chorus refers to itself as small folk who live among small things at the temporal plain and do not want to be drawn into the eternal pattern of fate. The Chorus here is like the Chorus in Greek drama. Like the Chorus in Sophocles' *Antigone* which fears the conflict between state and the individual, actr inspired by divinity, here too the Chorus fear the church / state conflict. Summary of Second Priest's Speech The second priest chides the "poor women" of Canterbury for babbling foolishly. He tells them that the Archbishop is about to arrive at any moment and the crowds in-the streets will be cheering. He tells the chorus not to "croak" like frogs and to put up pleasant faces whatever their "craven apprehension" may be and to give a hearty welcome to the Archbishop. Critical Commentary on Second Priest's Speech The second Priest uses a lot of animal imagery when he scolds the "poor women" of Canterbury represented by the Chorus. This is significant. These women are leading an animal like existence away from the "still point" that is God. In the Christian hierarchy animals are lower down in the scale. Human beings are at the top of God's creation. Lower down are animals and still lower, is vegetation. The Chorus has to spiritually evolve into higher levels of existence to be one with the "Still Point." 8.5.

Exercises 1. Outline the historical background of the play. 2. Critically comment on the importance of the first two choric speeches. 3. Discuss the significance of the conversation among the Priests between the first two choric speeches. 4. Is there any development in the first two speeches of the Chorus?

Unit 9: Critical Approaches to The Play Part –I Structure 9.0 Objectives 9.1 Explanatory and Critical Notes on Part I of the play from Becket's first appearance upto the temptation scene in Part I 9.2 The Significance of Becket's silence after the temptations. 9.3 Explanatory and Critical Notes on Part I of the play from the Choric passage following the exit of the fourth Tempter upto the end of Part I 9.4 Important aspects of Part I 9.5 Exercises. 9.0. Objectives The aim of this unit is to provide you with a) Explanatory comments on Becket's first appearance in the play upto the end of the temptations in Part I. b) It also highlights the significance of Becket's silence after the temptations, and provides c) Explanatory comments from the Choric passage following the exit of the fourth Tempter upto the end of Part I 9.1 Explanatory and Critical Notes on Part I of the play from

Becket's first appearance up to the temptation scene in Part I Thomas' Dialogues with the Priests before his Temptations Thomas enters with the word "peace" and tells the Priest to let the Chorus alone because it "speaks better than it knows," and what it says is beyond the understanding of the Priests. He then goes on to say that the women of Canterbury do not know about action and suffering except the fact that "neither does the agent suffer /nor the patient act" The women are fixed in the wheel of eternal action in which all must consent to the will of God for the wheel to move in harmony. The second Priest apologises to Becket saying that he did not see him coming because he was involved with the chatter of the "poor women." He says that he would have been better prepared otherwise. However, seven years of Becket's absence has already prepared him for his arrival

which seven days in Canterbury would not have done. He then tells Becket that he will light the fires in Becket's room to ward off the December cold and that Becket will find his rooms as he left them. Thomas thanks the second Priest and says that he will leave the rooms the way he got them. But these are all "small matters," he says. He informs the Priests that there are enemies all around. Even his arrival in England could have been prevented by "Rebellious bishops, York, London, Salisbury." All of them had helped in the coronation of Henry II's successor without the permission of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Warrene, and the Sheriff of Kent tried to oppose Becket's return and Broc was the one in whose house the Knights stayed before and after the murder. Becket says that it was the Dean of Salisbury who helped him cross the sea "unmolested." To the first Priest's question whether the enemies are still following, Becket replies that this peace is temporary and that they will attack at the first opportunity. The "end will be simple, sudden, God-given," he observes. Meanwhile, he says that one has to overcome other problems in preparing for the event. Critical Commentary on the above passages Becket's first word "Peace" as he enters is very significant. In the play all the characters strive for "Peace" in different ways. The knights think that by killing Becket they can obtain "peace", the Priests think that they can obtain it by escaping. The Chorus feels that it can obtain "peace" by avoiding witnessing Becket's martyrdom. Becket is the only character who achieves true "peace" by conscious submission to the "Still Point." Becket's speech about acting and suffering is very important in understanding the Christian process of martyrdom: They know and do not know, what it is to act or suffer

They know and do not know, that action is suffering And suffering is action.

Neither does the agent suffer Nor the Patient act But both are fixed In an eternal action, an eternal patience To which all must consent that it may be willed And which all must suffer that they may will it, That the pattern may subsist! for the pattern is the action And the suffering, that the wheel may turn and still Be forever still.

What Becket means by this is that in the long run there is no question of deciding to either act or to suffer passively., There is no distinction between making a decision and passivity. Becket's very passivity is action and even that does not belong to him but is one with God's will. It is the divine pattern that is important not individual acting and suffering since God is ultimately in control. This control is not to be confused with predestination. Man has the free will to accept or to reject God's plan. Becket is tempted to do the latter, but he overcomes the temptation. Human beings must submit to God's plans for them. Becket's role in this pattern is to accept martyrdom while the role of lesser mortals as well as the Chorus is to humbly recognise the need for that sacrifice. Only when man's will is in complete harmony with the divine will can the wheel turn smoothly around the "Still Point." Suffering is not simply undergoing misery and pain. It is also permitting, consenting and submitting.

He who consents to an action must suffer for it

and accept responsibility. The Chorus, like the common man, understands no such responsibility. At the point in the play the Chorus says, "for us the poor, there is no action." But during the course of the play, it learns to participate in the action, "I have consented Lord Archbishop." When Becket says, "Neither does the agent suffer/nor the patient act," he is the agent in one sense. He sets the wheel rolling. In another sense he also suffers to be killed. But yet at another level, he is neither the agent nor the patient since action and suffering proceed from God's will and not his own. This is again the reason why Becket, referring to his enemies says, "For a little time the hungry hawk/Will only soar and hover, circling lower, /Waiting excuse, pretence, opportunity, End will be simple, sudden, God-given." He refers to his murderers as "hawks" highlighting the animal nature of this being. Becket is aware that no plotting can succeed until God wills his death. Becket's awareness parallels Christ's response, "My hour is not yet come." Like Christ, Becket too must first face temptation. He says this is more difficult than death. Meanwhile, "Ah things prepare the event. Watch." Explanation of the Temptation Scene The first Tempter calls Becket, "Old Tom, Gay Tom, Becket of London," and reminds him of his past when he was friends with the King. Now that Becket has again patched up with the King,

he asks him whether the "Clergy and laity may return to gaiety" of flirting in the meadows and enjoying life with all its pleasures. Becket responds by saying that the Tempter speaks of past seasons and that "in the life of one man, never / The same time returns." The first Tempter insists that the good times have come again with Becket's peace with the King. Becket chides him saying, "look to your behaviour." The first Tempter says that earlier Becket was kinder on sinners and that he should take friendly advice from him and choose a comfortable life and forget martyrdom. Becket tells him that he comes twenty years too late. To this the first Tempter says that he will leave Thomas to his "higher vices" and leaves. After the Tempter leaves, Becket comments that if one hoped that the past will return then one gets distracted from one's duties in the present. The second Tempter enters suggesting a compromise with Henry and reminds Becket of their amity. He refers to the historical context when the constitutions were presented to Becket at Clarendon and he faced the full force of the temptation of compromise with the King. In Northampton the King summoned him to account for money spent during Becket's Chancellorship. Here too Becket could have done the easier thing and submitted to the King. At Montmirail, another attempt was made to coax Becket to surrender to the King's point of view. The second Tempter states that if one weighs the balance between the "not too pleasant memories," and the "good memories" in his position as the Chancellor the "late one's rise!" He states that Becket, whom all acknowledged should "guide the state again." Becket is intrigued by his meaning and asks the Tempter to clarify. The second Tempter continues to stress the point that Becket should regain his "Chancellorship" and that it was a big mistake to have given it up. As a Chancellor, Becket will gain power and glory over men. To this Becket states "To the man of God what gladness?" The Tempter states that it is "sad" that the man who had real power on earth should fight for spiritual power in the next world by "giving love to God alone." To this Becket enquires "Who then?" and the second Tempter states if he take back his chancellorship he and the King can work together. They can help the poor, strengthen the laws of the country, dispense justice. What more can man do on earth for God? Becket asks "What Means?" The Tempter states that this could be achieved by compromise. This is because "Real power/ is purchased at the price of a certain submission." Becket rejects it and the Tempter tells him that by choosing the position of Archbishop and serving God, Becket is a "realmless ruler" bound to a "powerless Pope." He carries on by saying that men have to manipulate and manoeuvre. Even Kings need loyal friends to work with at home. Becket replies by saying that he had excommunicated the Bishops for assisting King Henry II in his son's coronation which was the prerogative of the Archbishop. To this the second Tempter says that "Hungry hatred / Will not strive against intelligent self- interest." Becket responds by asking, "What about the Barons?" The Tempter responds by saying that the King and chancellor have to work together against the barons who are their enemies. Becket dismisses the second Tempter by saying that why should he "Descend to desire a punier power" by serving the King over God. The second Tempter also leaves unsuccessfully. He recognises that Thomas is suffering from Pride in his own spiritual position. He says to him, "Your sin soars sunward, covering King's falcons." After he leaves, Becket ponders over what he has said and says that maintaining order at the temporal level is to arrest disorders and to descend to the temporal level "would now only be mean descent." At this point the third Tempter enters who is a representative of the Barons. He enters saying that he is not a courtier or a politician but a "rough straightforward Englishman, "a country lord" who knows what the country needs." He even alleges that they are "the backbone of the nation." Becket asks him to proceed with what he has to say and the Tempter continues by saying that friendship should be convenient "unreal friendship may turn to real / But real friendship, once ended, cannot be mended."

Becket replies by saying that for a countryman he speaks like a courtier. The third Tempter continues by saying that since Becket's friendship with King Henry II cannot be mended, he should now form new alliances. Becket who dearly loved the King, his friend feels the loss of the friendship and exclaims: "O Henry, O my King" The Tempter carries on by saying that the King in England is not at all powerful. His French link with his wife makes him susceptible to his sons stealing his kingdom. We the barons, he says are for England. Both Becket and the Tempter are Normans, unlike the King, who is from Anjou in France. "Let the Angevin / Destroy himself, fighting in Anjou." he suggests a "happy coalition/of intelligent interest." For him, (who represent the Barons) Church favours is an advantage and Pope's blessing "Powerful protection / In the fight for Liberty." The third Tempter says that if Becket joined their powers then they could put an end to "tyrannous jurisdiction" of the King's court over the Bishop's and the Baron's court helping both England and Rome in one

stroke. Becket claims that he helped to form it. The Tempter states that it is a new coalition that is needed now. Becket states that if he cannot trust the King then why would he trust the King's undoers? The Tempter says that the King will trust only his own power and no one else's. The church and those against him have every right to come together to fight the king. In this case, Becket says that if he cannot trust the King then it is better to trust God alone. He recalls that when he was a chancellor, these very people waited on him even in the "tilt-yard," (Becket was a great horseman in his early days). Becket argues why he who ruled like an "eagle among doves" now rules as "wolf among wolves? He dismisses the third Tempter by saying, "no one shall say that I betrayed a King." The third Tempter leaves saying that he hopes the King will acknowledge Becket's loyalty to him. After the third Tempter leaves, Becket says that the thought of breaking the power of the King has crossed his mind before but he has rejected it because he dearly loves the King and he trusts God. He further says, that to break the King's power at this point he would like what Samson achieved in Gaza when he pulled down the pillars of the house in which three thousand Philistines had gathered to watch him perform feats of strength: and so pulled down the same destruction on himself. If Becket were to act against the King now it would fall short of Samson's triumph and would only destroy himself. The fourth Tempter enters. Becket does not expect him "Who are you? I expected / Three visitors, not four." The fourth Tempter says that he always "Precedes expectation" and that the King will never trust "twice" the man who was his friend and betrayed him. He warns Becket about the offer made by the third Tempter who represents the Barons saying, "Kings have public policy / Barons private profit." He advises Becket to "fare forward to the end," because kingly power is more pleasurable than power under a king. The kind of spiritual power that Becket strives for is greater than temporal power "War, plague, and revolution, / New conspiracies, broken pacts: / To be master or servant within an hour, / This is the course of temporal power." He taunts Becket by saying that he has made a clever choice in privileging the eternal over the temporal because "When King is dead, there's another king" but "Saint and Martyr rule from the tomb." Unlike the political fears Kings may have Becket will have long lines of pilgrims waiting to see his tomb. Becket admits of these thoughts. The fourth Tempter says, that is why he is saying these things. He knows that Becket has thought about it all very carefully while praying or early in the morning. Becket knows that nothing at the temporal level lasts and that only the spiritual world triumphs so he should go towards martyrdom. Becket exclaims, "Who are you tempting with my own desires?" He feels trapped and says, "

Is there no way, in my soul's sickness, / Does not lead to damnation in pride?"

The fourth Tempter leaves echoing Becket's first speech about action and suffering. Critical Commentary on the Temptation Scene Nevill Coghill provides a good note on this scene. He says that there is no stage direction stating the exit of the Priests and the Chorus. This is because the Chapter House where Eliot staged the play had only one exit, therefore, it was difficult for the characters to enter the exit frequently. Becket's line, "All things prepare the event. Watch" demonstrates this problem very effectively. Viewed from another perspective, the characters presence on the stage is important because the Tempters could be merely figments of Becket's imagination, an internal conflict. Eliot, in this play, has brilliantly used his theory of "de-personalization" in poetry to his advantage. He has used a character whose spiritual growth demands a surrendering of his will to God—a depersonalization of the self. The Temptation scene is also important in that it introduces the morality play pattern in *Murder in the Cathedral*. As in the Morality plays there is personification. Eliot states that he was influenced by *Everyman* in his use of metre for the play. Becket's first temptation refers to his good times in the past. Becket was known for his good living. At a more significant level the first Tempter is asking Becket to move away from the still point, God. Technically, the first temptation is no temptation for Becket. Christ's temptation, which came after he had fasted for forty days and was alone in the wilderness, were genuinely difficult to overcome. In a sense Becket's first three Tempters are more akin to Job's comforters in the Book of Job of the Old Testament in the Bible. Indeed, Becket's remark to the Tempter proves that the first temptation is no temptation: "But in the life of one man, never / The same time returns." One of the problems that Eliot faces in his portrayal of Becket is to make a good character attractive. Milton faced a similar problem in his creation of Christ in *Paradise Lost*. Often these characters appear as a little priggish and stilted. The essence of the first Tempter's speech is that he wants Becket to choose a comfortable life on earth and forget martyrdom and its rewards

promised in the next world. The j Tempter exits saying "I leave you to the pleasures of your higher vices." This is significant. Spiritual pride is a vice that Becket must fight. The second Tempter provides a brief historical context for the central conflict between the King and Becket—representing the State and the Church, respectively. The Second Tempter appeals to Becket's love for power and cleverly tells Becket about the good that he can do on earth for God with earthly power. Becket's response "What Means?" points to the Key question in Christianity viz. that means and end are important. Later, Becket refers to the danger of doing the right thing for the wrong reason. When the second Tempter tells Becket to join hands with the King to unite against England's enemies at home and abroad, Becket says : "No! Shall I, Who keep the keys / of heaven and hell, supreme alone in England /

who bind and loose, with power from the Pope / Descend to desire a punier power?" This response of Becket shows that he is not free from spiritual pride. The second Tempter's reference to "bind and loose" refers to Christ's saying to his disciple, Peter, in the Gospel of St. Matthew Ch. 16 V. 19 "And I shall give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whosoever thou shalt

bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whosoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

The first two Tempters play upon Becket's love for power and pleasure: and his love for the King. Becket overcomes both these weaknesses during the course of temptations. It must be noted that although the Tempters are numbered they have very distinct personalities. The fourth Tempter is totally unexpected. He is the most frightening of the Tempters. In a sense, the earlier three temptations were really no challenge to Becket. The fourth Tempter taunts him about his spiritual pride. Becket overcomes this temptation before us in the play. Becket says of the fourth Tempter, "Who are you tempting me with my own desires?" The fourth Tempter tempts Becket with the glories of eternal sainthood as compared to the transient glories at the temporal level. He tells Becket that his choice for the eternal over the temporal, is clever. The aim of the fourth Tempter is to undermine Becket's faith. His goal is achieved if Becket surrenders to despair or aspires to pride. Infact, Becket comes close to this when he says, "

Is there no way, in my soul's sickness, / Does not lead to damnation in pride."

It must be noted that the fourth Tempter appears when Becket's rejection of time is complete. He advocates perception from the vantage point of the fourth dimension of time, eternity. Becket now feels trapped. His "near despair" after the fourth Tempter leaves, is reflected in the speech of the Chorus. Becket is almost in danger of being absorbed into the abyss of despair. He has to actively overcome this temptation. It involves considerable internal conflict mirrored both in his Christmas sermon and the second part of the play. In 1934 Eliot said, "with the disappearance of the idea of intense moral struggle, the human being presented to us both in poetry and prose fiction today... tend to become less real. It is infact during moments of moral and spiritual struggle—that men and women come nearest to being real" (.After Strange Gods). The characters in *Murder in the Cathedral* are real from this point of view. The fourth Tempter leaves echoing Becket's opening speech in the play about acting and suffering. "Martin Browne states that when the fourth Tempter talks of the turning of the wheel, he is refering to it as something mechanical which makes action and suffering meaningless. Becket feels trapped after the fourth Tempter tempts him and this is reflected in the ironical repetition of Becket's own speech by the Tempter. Becket, the teacher, has now become the pupil. He has to learn the true meaning of martyrdom. Despair and pride are seen only in relation to man's will not God's. Becket is forced to find a way out of his paradox. The stillness of the wheel is later contrasted with the "restlessness in the house" expressed by the chorus in their outburst following the temptations. 9.2. Becket's Silence after the Fourth Temptation After the fourth Tempter leaves, Becket remains silent while all the other character speak. This certainly dramatises the intense conflict in Becket. It is through this silence that Becket overcomes the fourth temptation viz. attack on his pride. This silence is also significant because it makes us realize that Becket goes through conflict and suffering before he becomes a martyr. If this process had not taken place his death would have been misread as the "self slaughter of a lunatic." It is important to examine the nature of the dramatic strategies used by Eliot to show how Becket

overcomes his last temptation before he is ready for martyrdom. In doing this one should keep in mind the particular kind of audience the play was catering to, Eliot's use of language and metre to create dramatic effects, and the constraints both religious and theatrical within which Eliot had to operate. As stated earlier, the play was written for the Canterbury Festival of June 1935 and it catered to a specifically Christian audience. It was performed in the Chapter House of the Cathedral. The architectural and acoustic peculiarities of the place imposed some dramatic constraints on Eliot. For instance, the almost ponderous and heavy effect of some of the speeches in *Murder in the Cathedral* is deliberate, so that words could be enunciated and not lost in transmission. The simultaneous presence of several characters on the stage is also a direct consequence of the architectural peculiarity of the place. The Chapter House as we know had only one door for the characters to enter and exit from. Could this be one of the reasons for the simultaneous presence of the Tempters, the Chorus and the Priests on the stage after Becket's last temptation? Or, is Eliot not willing to present God, even for a religious audience? In other words, rather than showing God Eliot chose the combined effect of the Chorus, Tempters and the Priests to dramatize the whirlwind which signifies God's presence in the Book of Job. The central problem which Eliot faced in dramatically portraying the resolution of Becket's conflict was to convincingly exteriorize Becket's interior conflict. As Helen Gardner rightly says: "...the last temptation is so subtle and interior that no audience can judge whether it is truly overcome or not." If we are to believe Becket when he says "Temptation shall not come in this kind again," what are the dramatic strategies used by Eliot to lead us to this belief? It may be noted that Eliot was working against a dramatic tradition which was essentially naturalistic. Therefore, to put words of humility in Thomas' own mouth would make him appear the opposite of humble. Perhaps this accounts for the long silence between Becket's words after the last Tempter tempts him, and his expression of the resolution of his conflict in his speech "

now is my way clear, now is the meaning plain."

Referring to the difficulty of judging whether the last temptation has been overcome i Helen Gardner says: "we have to take it for granted that Thomas dies with a pure will, or else, more properly, ignore the whole problem of motives as beyond our competence and accept the fact of his death" (The Art of T.S. EliotP.134).Interestingly, Eliot's essay on "Poetry and Drama" offers a possible interpretation to the dramatic strategy used by him, in dramatising Becket's resolution of the conflict. In the essay he says: "It seems to me that beyond the nameable classifiable emotions and motives of our conscious life when directed towards action, the part of life which prose drama is wholly adequate to express there is a fringe of indefinite extent, of feeling which one can only detect, so to speak, out of the corner of the eye and can never completely focus; of feeling of which we are only aware in a kind of temporary detachment from action." Could Becket's silence after the fourth Tempter tempts him be that "feeling of which we are only aware in a kind of temporary detachment from action?" 9.3.

Explanatory

and Critical Notes on Part I of the play from

the

Choric passage following the exit of the fourth Tempter upto the end of Part I The choric outburst that follows after the fourth Tempter exits conveys the restlessness of the people. There is restlessness, these "poor women" of Canterbury say, in the "house" and in the "street." The air is oppressive and clammy; the sky "thick and heavy." Images of the earth birthing "issue of hell" contribute to the general sense of horror. Following the choric outburst, the four Tempters collectively talk about the unreality of all things. Any award or prize on earth in the ultimate analysis is not worth winning not even the hope of martyrdom. It is like "hankering for the cat in the Pantomime, which isn't a cat at all, but just another cheat" (Neville Coghill). The Tempters want the audience to adopt their point of view in condemning Becket's martyrdom as an illusive and childish act that is "out of touch with reality." They refer to Becket as "obstinate, blind, intent / On self-destruction," someone who is "lost in the wonder of his own greatness, / The enemy of society, enemy of himself." The three Priests-like the four Tempters—collectively tell Becket not to fight the forces against him. They ask him to wait until things subside. Following the collective plea of the Priests to Becket, the Chorus, Tempters and the Priests alternately highlight "Prowling presences" like "rain that taps at the window, " "wind that pokes at the door" and the "mastiff1 prowling at the gate. Images of death and violence are also picked up by them. Phrases like "a sudden shock on the skull," "drowned in a ditch" and "feel the cold in his groin" intensify and atmosphere of anxiety. The Chorus now enter and tell Becket that they are not happy about the present situation. They state that they are not "ignorant women" and know "what to expect and not expect." In life they have known suffering, "extortion and violence, "of "the old without fire in winter" the "child without milk in summer, "young men "mutilated" and "the tom girl trembling by the mill- stream." Despite all these problems, the "poor women" state that they have carried on with life by "picking together the pieces." They say that they carried on "Living and partly living" because they felt that God gave them some reason to hope. But now with the new developments they feel very frightened. They sense a terror enveloping them "which none can avert, none can / avoid, flowing under our feet and over the sky / Under doors and down chimneys, flowing in at the ear and / the mouth and the eye." These "poor women" express despair which is encapsulated in their words, "God is leaving us, God is leaving us, more pang, more pain / than birth or death." Their despair is highlighted through the animal imagery that they use: "Puss-purr of leopard, footfall of padding bear, / Palm-pat of nodding ape, square hyaena waiting." They plead with their archbishop Becket to save them by saving himself. If he destroys himself, they too will be destroyed. After a long silence (in which he undergoes intense conflict and straggle over the temptations) Becket speaks. His internal struggle, as explained earlier, was dramatized by Eliot through the collective presence and speeches of the Chorus, Tempters and Priests on the stage. Becket is now clear about the meaning of his life. No longer will any temptation upset the peace and understanding that he now has. He admits that "

The last temptation is

the greatest treason: / To do the right deed for the wrong reason."

Becket recalls his life in the last thirty years and says that he has "searched all the ways / That lead to pleasure, advancement and price" at the temporal level. To v become a "servant of God" was never his wish. It is difficult to serve God because one can fall into spiritual arrogance by doing the "right deed for the wrong reasons." In other words, by resisting sins you may open your heart to the pride of having resisted it and

develop contempt for those who are unable to do so. Becket says that he can for see how history will interpret his death as the-"senseless self-slaughter of a lunatic, / Arrogant passion of a fanatic." The fourth Knight's words at the end of the play corroborates it, viz. that Becket committed "Suicide while of Unsound Mind." Becket, continues by saying that all those who are implicated in evil will be punished. As for himself, he says that he shall not "act or suffer" and surrender himself to God. This is reflected in the sermon that he gives soon after. Critical Commentary on the above passage The "restlessness" of the Chorus express the anguish of Becket after the fourth Tempter leaves. Their "restlessness" is also in contrast to the stillness of the "still point." Terrible images like that of the "withered tree" and "sickly smells" dominate not only the tone of the passage but also the state of the country and its people.. There is a general sense of decay. Eliot's contention that human nature shares in the Evil which befell all nature after the Fall is seen in this speech. In a sense, the dismal picture that emerges from this passage clearly points to the need for Becket's martyrdom to save the world. In the collective speech of the four Tempters there is a sudden shift from the 12th century to the 20th. The Tempter like the Knights later-try to persuade the audience to see things from their point of view. They deliberately use images from the 20th century to bridge the distance between them and the audience. This speech by the four Tempters clearly points to their stand regarding Becket's martyrdom. However, the irony lies in the fact that it is people like them who necessitate Becket's martyrdom to cleanse the world from sins. The three Priests in collectively persuading Becket to give up his battle demonstrate their lack of religious strength. They too need to grow and understand the meaning of martyrdom. These lamentors fear death because they see it as sudden and unprepared. Becket's attitude is different. He sees his death as being in God's hands. It is never an accident but planned. The speech alternately spoken by the Chorus, Priests and the Tempters resembles the Liturgy during a Christian mass service. This technique of alternation is also akin to "stichomythia," in Greek tragedy.

The choric speech that follows foregrounds the extent of the terror and disease that has set in. They speak of terrible images of rape, violence, deprivation and death. The oppression and torture" that the "poor women" speak of refer specifically to the days of King Stephen (whom King Henry II succeeded) when many were tortured by "brigand barons" for information regarding hidden wealth. It is important to note that the Chorus too must learn that death is frightening only if one sees it as individual annihilation and not as part of God's plan. The Chorus claim not to be "ignorant women" yet they don't seem to realize that they are living at the temporal level of linear time. They do not have a totality of existence, "Living and partly living, / Picking together the pieces." They have to learn that "sleeping and eating and drinking" is not adequate to realize the full potential of one's being. In the Gospel of St. Matthew, Christ had said that "man does not live by bread alone" to his tempter who tempted him with food while he was hungry (see Matthew Ch 4). The terror depicted by the Chorus in this speech is the kind of despair the Tempters wanted Becket to fall into. The Chorus can only understand private catastrophe and personal loss. They cannot comprehend that which is out of time and yet they are not at ease with the old dispensation (like the magi in Eliot's poem, "The Journey of the Magi.") Rebirth is always painful. It may be noted that Becket's lines before he surrenders to his death in Part II of the play, strike a contrast to the function of the Chorus at the linear level of time. He says:

It is not in time that my death shall be known: It is out of time that my decision is taken If you call that
a

decision To which my whole being gives entire consent. I

give my life To the Law of God above the Law of

Man. Critical Commentary on Becket's Speech after his Temptations Becket's opening words "

now is my way clear, now is the meaning plain"

tells us that he has indeed overcome the fourth temptation. The clarity of his belief that is I revealed here is later shown in Becket's sermon preached on Christmas day. The process through which he overcomes, is seen in his long silence-discussed earlier. Becket admits that

the last temptation was the toughest "To do the right deed for the wrong reason."

His recapitulating his past thirty years during which he explored all forms of pleasure

at the linear level and his distance from it all now, shows that the first three temptations were no real challenge to him.

He has now achieved a real sense of calm expressed in "I shall no longer act or suffer." He is ready to face death when it comes. In this speech, Becket's address to the audience "you and you" parallel the Knights address to them later in the play.

9.4. IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF PART I The Chorus is very timid and fearful, worse still, it is content to live lives of spiritual stagnation. But there is hope for them because they know their own weaknesses. Part II shows their growth. The Tempters although individualized could be viewed as aspects of Becket's personality. We get the historical background of the play. Eliot never lets us lose our grip on historical facts. There are constant references to meetings and treatises. What the Chorus perceives as a sense of doom, Becket sees as peace before death. The idea of martyrdom is developed. Man must submit to God's will. 9.5. Exercises 1. Delineate the nature of the four temptations that Becket undergoes. 2.

Critically comment on the significance of Becket's silence after the fourth temptation

UNIT 10: Critical Approaches to The Play - Part II Structure 10.0 Objectives 10.1 Eliot's Christian Perspective 10.2 Becket's Christmas Sermon: Explanatory and Critical Notes. 10.3 Murder in the Cathedral as a Christian History Drama 10.4 Explanatory and Critical Notes on Part II of the play from the First Choric entrance in Part II upto the entry of the Four Knights 10.5 Explanatory and Critical Notes on the section from the Entrance of the Knights upto their exit 10.6 Exercises

10.0. Objectives 1. The aim of this unit is to make you aware of 2. Eliot's Christian Perspective 3. Explanatory comments on Thomas Becket's Christmas Sermon 4. Murder in the Cathedral as a Christian History Drama 5. Explanatory Comments on the lives from the First Choric entrance in part II upto the entry of the Four Knights Comments 6. Explanatory Comments on the Section from the Entrance of the Knights upto their Exit 10.1. Eliot's Christian Perspective As stated earlier T. S. Eliot was raised in a family which had very strong Unitarian beliefs. However, he did not find Unitarianism sufficient for his own spiritual needs. Contrary to the opinion of many critics, Eliot did not invent his own version of Christianity. He was an "Incarnational Christian," that is, he believed that the coming of Christ was the most important event in history and that "Sacramental Worship" reaffirmed this. Eliot converted to Anglican Catholicism in 1927_but it was only a year later that he made this fact public. In his preface to For Sir Lancelot Andrewes (published in 1928) Eliot declared that he was "

a

Classicist in literature, Royalist in politics and Anglo Catholic in religion."

The

year of Eliot's conversion was also the year that he published "The Journey of the Magi" (an Ariel Christmas poem). The poem is based on-a Christmas sermon of the seventeenth century Anglican divine, Bishop Lancelot Andrewes. Interestingly, although the devotional prayers of Bishop Andrewes were published after he died, it was Eliot who showed the world that Bishop Andrewes was also a significant preacher. Eliot was introduced to the works of Lancelot Andrewes through William Force Stead whom he had met at a party in 1923. He was an American diplomat in England but had resigned his job to get ordained in the Church of England. Both Stead and Eliot shared a common interest in the study of seventeenth century Anglican Divines particularly Sir Lancelot Andrewes. Critical Approaches to the play-Part-II Eliot was particularly lured by Bishop Andrewes' ability to temper his emotions with -his intellect. He liked his "medieval temper" which was balanced as compared to the flashy brilliance of John Donne. It was through the works of Bishop Andrewes that Eliot discovered not only the importance of "Orthodox Christianity" as a medium between skepticism and isolation, but also the doctrine of the incarnation of Christ. In his essay, For Sir Lancelot Andrewes (1928), Eliot describes Andrewes' appeal for him. He felt that Andrewes in his sermon was "alone with the alone." He was not like Donne who was combating a strong emotional personality. Andrewes became one with the subject. Ironically, it is while Eliot was getting acquainted with the doctrines of Lancelot Andrewes that he wrote the poem, "The Hollow Men." This poem exposes the spiritual aridity of the modern age. But it also marks the turning point in Eliot's life. Following this

in 1930, Eliot published his next major poem "Ash Wednesday", written after his conversion

in 1927. The poem is seen as the story of Eliot's conversion with all his skepticism and doubts. It is perceived as a poem which charts Eliot's spiritual ascent from the meaningless world of "The Hollow Men." "Ash Wednesday" was structurally built on a phrase about "Two Turnings" which Bishop Andrewes had declared were necessary for conversion. The one looking to God and the other to the sinful past. After his conversion, Eliot loved a life which was responsible to the doctrines of the Church. In fact, when Eliot finally decided to separate from his first wife, Vivienne, he did not have divorce in mind. Nor did he intend to remarry until she died since that was the official position of the Church of England. What established Eliot as a "Defendant" of the Church of England was the pageant play, The

Rock. He was commissioned to write this play. The scenario for this pageant was given to him by Brown and Webb Odell. However, the ten choric passages that Eliot wrote were what made the pageant a success. In *The Rock* Eliot was learning how to use a chorus for dramatic exposition. Bishop Bell of Chichester came to see *The Rock* and was very pleased by it. It was the success of *The Rock* that made Bishop Bell commission Eliot to write a play for the Canterbury Festival. This play was *Murder in the Cathedral*, Thus Eliot's first two plays are both religious verse dramas. Eliot felt that preserving Christianity was important for civilization. In his essays, "The Idea of a Christian Society" Eliot described the kind of Christian society needed to be built in "England's green and pleasant land." For him the disappearance of Christianity was the end of western civilization. Eliot believed that a Christian elite would head an ideal community because for him a neutral society would not live long. He felt that the Church needed to intervene and point out what was right and wrong. But, for the Church to be effective, he felt there must be a Christian community studying and supporting these ideals. He also claimed that Christian views could not be private because it is hard to be a Christian in a non-Christian society. This is why he felt that Churches and Christian institutions were important. In 1948, Eliot's *Notes Toward the Definition of Culture* was published. This was his first book length study in which he spoke about his social and spiritual concerns for "Christendom," in a post World War world. The main aim of this book was to show the relation between religion and culture. For peace in the post World War age a common faith was needed. That faith for Eliot was Christianity.

10.2. Becket's Christmas Sermon: Explanatory and Critical Notes The sermon begins with the 14th verse of Ch. 2 of the Gospel of St. Luke. Becket addresses the congregation which has gathered for the sermon in a very loving way as "dear children of God." He tells them that his Christmas sermon is going to be a short one and asks them to meditate upon the mystery of the Christmas mass. He says that whenever mass is celebrated, Christ's death is celebrated. What he means by this is since Christ died to save human beings from sins, his death becomes a celebration. Becket then goes on to say that on Christmas day mass has a special meaning because that was the day Christ was born. So when one celebrates mass on Christmas one celebrates Christ's birth and death simultaneously. He then goes on to say that it was on the night before Christmas that Angels appeared before the shepherd at Bethlehem, saying, "

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace

to

men of good will." The fact that the

Christmas mass is both a celebration of Christ's birth and his death on the cross, Becket points out, may appear strange to the world. This, he says, is because no one mourns and rejoices in the same moment. In the Christian mystery, however, to mourn and rejoice at the same time is possible. Becket then goes on to ask the congregation whether it seems strange that the angels should have spoken of "peace" considering the fact that the world has had ceaseless wars or the fear of war. Becket presents the congregation with a rhetorical question. Could it be that the angels were mistaken or was the promise "a disappointment and a cheat?" Becket asks the congregation to reflect on how the Lord (Christ) spoke of "peace." He said to his disciples "peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." He questions whether by peace Christ meant what we mean by it? That is, England at peace with its neighbours, the barons at peace with the king, the householder counting over his peaceful gains etc. He further adds that Christ's disciple did not know of these things. They gave up everything to spread God's words through land and sea. They faced torture, imprisonment and disappointment to "suffer death by martyrdom." What did Christ mean by peace? Christ had said "not as the world gives, give I unto you." So the peace he gave his disciples is not the peace the world gives. Becket asks the congregation to note the fact that on Christmas not only is Christ's birth and death celebrated together, but on the very next day we celebrate the martyrdom of his first martyr, the blessed Stephen. Is it a coincidence that this should happen? By no means. That is, Becket says, just as we celebrate the birth and death of Christ, similarly we do the same for the martyrs. We mourn for the sins that led to their martyrdom but we also rejoice in these martyrs becoming saints in heaven "for the glory of God and for the salvation of men." Becket once again addresses the congregation with affection as "beloved" and says that we do not view a martyr "simply as a good Christian because that would be only to mourn. Nor do we see the martyr as only saint because that would be to only rejoice." Neither our mourning nor our rejoicing is as the world sees. "

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Christian martyrdom is never an accident, for saints are not made by accident" nor is

a Christian martyrdom the will of

a man to become a saint because this would lead him to be a ruler of men. "A martyrdom is always the design of God," to lead men back to God's ways. It is the ability of man to surrender his will to God, to desire nothing

for

himself, not even the glory of being a martyr.

Just as on earth the church mourns and rejoices at once which the world cannot understand, so in heaven the saints are honoured for having made themselves low on earth. They are seen not as we see them but in "the light of the Godhead from which they draw their being." Becket concludes his sermon by referring to the congregation as the "children of God" saying, he has asked them to remember

the martyrs of the past especially the martyr of Canterbury, Archbishop Elphege; because on Christmas day it is important to remember "that Peace which he brought," and also because Becket feels that he may not

preach to them again and maybe in a short time they may have another martyr and perhaps not the last.

He ends saying, "I

would have you keep in your hearts these words that I say, and think of them at another time.

In the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." Critical Comments on the above Sermon Just as Christ's temptation is followed by the Sermon on the Mount (see Gospel according to St. Matthew), similarly Becket's temptation is followed by this sermon. In this sermon Becket highlights the paradox and mystery of Christianity and the meaning of Christian martyrdom. When he talks about the world possibly interpreting the angels' declaration of peace as a "disappointment and a cheat" he may be referring to his own doubts during his temptation. John the Baptist in the prison also felt this way. When Becket asks the congregation to reflect on the word "peace," which Christ spoke of, he tries to distinguish between two notions of peace. For Christ peace did not mean "peace" as status quo at the temporal level but "peace" in terms of spiritual calm at the eternal level. The peace chorus wants is the peace as status quo.

However, they grow and come to understand its true meaning through Becket's martyrdom. In the sermon Becket deliberately enlists the martyrs who follow Christmas day. He wants to make the people aware that martyrs re-enact Christ's sacrifice from age to age as a reminder. As stated earlier, it is in this sermon that Becket explains the process of Christian martyrdom. He tells us that martyrdom is always the design of God. Man has to submit his will to God's will and desire nothing

for himself, "not even the glory of being a martyr."

From this

remark it is clear that Becket has obviously overcome his fourth temptation. Becket's statement that just as on Christmas mass, Christ's birth and death are simultaneously celebrated, the person who is made a saint and honoured in heaven has to lead a humble life on earth, touches upon a basic tenet of Christianity. In the sermon on the Mount Christ tells his disciples that to follow God one has to give up everything at the materialistic level. The opening lines of the Sermon, known as the Beatitudes, encapsulate these beliefs: "whosoever is rich on earth will be poor in heaven and the meek and mild on earth will be rewarded and honoured in heaven." For martyrdom total submission to God is important. The wheel image expresses this in the play. Just as the different spokes of a wheel submit to the centre for coordination in order to turn smoothly, similarly, for God's design to be carried out man must coordinate his individual will with God's will. Becket concludes his sermon by referring to the martyr of Canterbury, the blessed Archbishop Elphege. St. Elphege lived between ad 954 and 1012 and became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1006. When the Danes sacked Canterbury, he was murdered. It is appropriate that Becket should refer to him in the face of his own impending death. The sermon is beautifully symbolic of the still centre of anarchy loosed around Becket. It is appropriate that the sermon (the interlude) divides parts I and II of the play. 10.3. Murder in The Cathedral as a Christian History Drama The notion of Christian history is very different from traditional notions of history. While the latter, records events without any relation to a metastory, the former specifically refers to all happening on earth as one metastory centring around God. It starts with the creation of Human beings by God then goes onto the fall of Adam and Eve from paradise and moves in a linear progression right upto the day of judgement. This history's true meaning at the linear of temporality is manifested best in Christ's death for the sins of human beings and his resurrection (rising again from death). In Christ's death, the temporal and the eternal, time and the timeless, human and the divine intersect, giving a new meaning to temporal events in history. It is important to note that the entering of the timeless into time, finite creates the paradox of the "Still Point" which is both inside time and yet outside of it. After Eliot's conversion in 1928, he was becoming increasingly "committed to the dogma of Incarnation" (See, "The Pensees of Pascal," Selected Essays'). It is important to remember that this is indeed the basis of the Christian notion of history. Becket, in his Christmas sermon (which forms the Interlude in the play), explains the meaning of Christ's death and resurrection. That

Eliot should have placed the Interlude (structurally at the centre of the play) to express this central notion of Christian history speaks for itself. The paradoxes of the human and the divine, time and the timeless etc. which are embodied in Christ are emphasized by Becket in his sermon which highlights the simultaneity of rejoicing and mourning in Christianity. Christian history is a "providentially oriented history of salvation." All paradoxes in time resolved only in God at the end of time which is the Last Judgement in Christianity. Significantly, the death of saints and martyrs also ennoble mundane history at the temporal level by transforming it into events willed by God, Becket, the Chorus (who represent a type of the common man), the Priests and the Knights must understand this and affirm it. This is "the dramatic action that the play presents." The history of salvation then, offers everyman the same religious duties to fulfill towards God. The path to those duties is through temptation, sin, repentance, penance and regeneration. Becket's Christmas (Interlude) explains that he has found his place and role in this history of salvation: "A martyrdom is always the design of God." This is an insight that other characters— Chorus, Priests and Knights—have yet to acquire. The soul becomes the "battlefield of timeless forces, where good and evil struggle perpetually for supremacy." But it is the notion of history as salvation which makes Christians believe that ultimately good will triumph over evil. Infact this is a notion to any concept of Christian history and this is again the reason why Christian history does not focus particularly on the political, social and economic events so important to traditional history. The development of T.S. Eliot's own historical thinking before and after his conversion is an example in point. In his essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" published in 1919, he had spoken about the notions of "pastness and presentness" in the context of cultural and literary history. However, after his conversion we notice a change. He now sees tradition and history as gaining meaning and existence only through the Christian notion of history which centres around God. This is illustrated best in Eliot's use of the image of the "wheel." The historically acquired meaning of this image ranges from the seasonal cycle's inevitability to other meaning, in a Christian frame it refers to the perfection of God.

In the above context, it is significant that the feasts of different saints and martyrs that follow Christmas are mentioned in Becket's Christian sermon. In doing this, Eliot lifts history and time from the linear and the chronological to the eternal and a historical. The history of salvation is privileged over traditional history. Again the scenic presentation of the assassination strikingly demonstrates that linear time has been exploded. The Knights kill Becket by encircling him. Becket becomes a version of Chris) and the history of salvation is again repeated. 104 Explanatory and Critical Notes on Part II of The Play From The First Choric Entrance In Part II Upto The Entry Of The Four Knights PART II: CHARACTERS Three Priests Four Knights Archbishop Thomas Becket Chorus of Women of Canterbury Attendants SCENE: The Cathedral. December 29, 1170. The speech of the Chorus begins bleakly with a note of sorrow. It refers to "sea birds" who are driven "inland by the storm, "to the "still and stifling air" and the owl that rehearses the "hollow note of death." But, it claims that "a wind is stored up in the East." It questions the fact that even near the time of Christ's birth (celebrated in Christmas) there is no peace nor good will among men. The Chorus then states that peace among men is never certain unlike peace with God. Wars in this world create evil in man, Christ's death renews life. Unless life is cleansed in winter only a bad spring will follow which will result in a "parched summer, an empty harvest." The Chorus once again questions what work can be done between Christmas and Easter? According to it life will merely carry on with the ploughman going out in March to turn the "same earth / He has turned before," the birds too shall "sing the same song." When spring arrives and old people and children are seen outdoors, what work, the Chorus says would the people have done? "What wrong / Shall the bird's song cover, the green tree cover, what wrong Shall the fresh earth cover?" The Chorus then states that they will wait, although the time for a change is short, the waiting is long.

At this point the first Priest enters with a banner of St. Stephen and the "Introit of St. Stephen" is heard. The Introit is a sentence or a phrase that is taken from the Psalms, or elsewhere in the Bible. This is either said or sung as the Priest approaches the altar to celebrate the Eucharist (which is the Body of Christ symbolised by bread or white wafer-like biscuit, known as the host and wine which represents his blood). This is the most important part of the Mass. When the first Priest says, "since Christmas a day: and the day of St. Stephen, First martyr," he refers to the day after Christmas which was also the feast day of St. Stephen. Feast days are special days when martyrs and saints are remembered. The line spoken by the first Priest, "Princes moreover did sit, and did witness falsely against me" is a line taken from Psalm 119, V: 23 from the Bible. The feast of St. Stephen, the first Priest says was always very dear to Becket. The second Priest soon enters with a banner of St. John the Apostle and the Introit of St. John is heard. The second Priest refers to St. John the apostle . whose feast day follows that of St. Stephen. He quotes from Psalm 22 V22 of the Bible: " In the midst of the congregation he opened his mouth."

The line following this psalm is taken from I John, Ch. 1 V. 1. The third Priest enters next with the banner of the Holy Innocents. The feast day of "Holy Innocents" follows the feast day of St. John. This is what his opening lines refer to. The quote from the bible is taken from Psalm 8. V.2 which says, "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies." The line "They sung as it were a new song" is taken from Psalm 96 V.I. His following line refers to Psalm 79 V 2-3 and Psalm 79 V.3 where a reference is made the flesh of the saints being given to the beasts of the earth and their blood being shed like water in Jerusalem. There was no one there to even bury their bodies. The third Priest's line "Avenge, O Lord, the blood of thy saints" is taken from Deuteronomy XXXV11, V. 43 from the Old Testament. This line refers to the belief that God will avenge those who shed the blood of his believers in his name. The line "In Rama, a voice was heard, there was weeping" is taken from the Gospel of St. Matthew Ch. 2 verse 18.in the New Testament, This is actually a reference to an Old Testament prophecy that was fulfilled in the New Testament. Next the three Priests stand together with their respective banners and together quote from Psalm 42. V 4 "Rejoice we all, keeping holy day." The first Priest then refers to Christ's death on the cross for the sins of the people. "He lays down his life for the sheep" is a quotation from John XV. 14-15 and it refers to Christ's willing death on the cross to redeem human beings from their sins. The three Priests then talk about whether "To-day" is the holy day. That is, the "day" that they "hope for or fear for." The third Priest goes on to say that even, ' day we hope for or fear for and it is "only in retrospection, selection-, / We say, that was the day." He concludes by saying that the "eternal design" may appear even now in "sordid particulars." It is at this point that the Knights enter. Critical Commentary on the Passage Explained Above We notice a change in the Chorus now. Although their speech begins bleakly there is no despair. Some knowledge of God's purpose has crept into their understanding. This is expressed through phrases like, "

The peace of this world is always uncertain, unless men keep / the peace of God, "

or "

the world must be cleaned in the winter, or we shall have only / A sour Spring"

etc. Towards the end of their speech the maturity of the Chorus is evident from their remark that they are willing to wait voluntarily: "We wait, and the time is short / But waiting is long." This also refers to the martyrdom of Becket. They no longer seek to escape it. Interestingly, part II opened originally with the lines spoken by the Priests. In the second edition (1936) these lines were substituted by the lines of the Chorus which now opens Part II. It is important to note that the three Priests mark the passage of three days after Christmas. These three days precede Becket's murder. The three days that follow Christmas were important because they were the feast days of St. Stephen, St. John and the Holy Innocents. The scene is deliberately made ritualistic by Eliot. He makes the Priests quote in a form Ula-like fashion from the Psalms and other books of the Old and the New Testaments. Eliot belived that such ritual and religions like elements lay at the root of drama. When the third Priest says, "only in retrospection, selection, / We say, that was the day" he is referring to the fact that it is in "time" that we "conquer" time. This is a very crucial concept both in this play and in Christianity. 4.5

Explanatory and Critical Notes on the Section From The Entrance of The Knights Upto Their Exit

The first Knight enters saying "Servants of the King" to the Priests. The first Priest tells the first Knight that he is known to them and enquires if he has travelled for to get to them. 'The

first Knight says that they (the four knights) arrived from France the previous day by ship because they have "business with the Archbishop." The first Priest tells the first knight that he and his men must dine with the Archbishop. He also adds that they will be looked after well and asks them "Dinner before –business. Do you like roast Pork?" To this the first Knight says that they would like business before dinner and that they will "roast" their pork "first, and dine upon it after." By this they mean that they will first murder the Archbishop and then celebrate. The third Knight rudely tells the priest that they do not need the Archbishop's hospitality and will find their own dinner. The Priest sends for Becket who arrives. He tells the Priests that no matter how well prepared one is when the actual moment comes one is "engrossed with matters of other urgency." He tells the Priests that all his papers on the table are in order and that the documents are all signed. Becket then welcomes the Knights and asks them what their business with him is. The first Knight says that the business is from the king and that he would like to talk to Becket alone: Becket asks the Priests to leave him and asks the Knights to tell him about the business. The Knights together accuse Becket of revolting against the King and the law of the land; of showing ingratitude to a king who made him the Archbishop and insensitivity to the person who raised Becket "the tradesman's Son: the backstairs / brat who was born in Cheap side: . . . / Creeping out of London dirt, "by endowing him with position and power. Becket retorts by saying that none of it is true and that he has always been a loyal subject to the king except when he has asked him to overrule God's law for the state law. The Knights—who are bigoted to the King's cause—volunteer to pray to God so that he can help Becket. Becket then asks the Knights if their "urgent business" was merely to scold him? The knights argue back by telling Becket that they are expressing their "indignation, as loyal subjects.." Becket asks them "Loyal to whom?" and the third Knight says, "The King." Becket then tells them that if they have anything to tell him as a command from the King, then it should be done in public. If charges are made against him, in public he will refute them. The first Knight tries to attack Becket but the Priests and the Attendants intervene. Becket then says that he will face the charges "now and here." The first Knight says that he does not want to repeat the misdeeds that Becket has committed in the past because they are too well known. Becket, the Knight says, instead of being grateful for being made an Archbishop by the King, fled to France in the hope "of stirring up trouble in the French dominions." Moreover, Becket also played the French King against the English King. The Pope was also made to believe "false opinions" of him. The second Knight goes on to say that the King was charitable enough to show kindness and make a peace pact with him and sent Becket back to Canterbury as he demanded. The third Knight adds that the King even restored all honours and possessions despite Becket's transgressions. But Becket showed no gratitude. The first Knight says that this ingratitude was expressed in Becket's suspending "those who had crowned the King's son, the young Prince" by claiming it an illegal act: Becket responds by saying that it was never his Wish to "uncrown the king's son, or to diminish / His honours and power." On the contrary, he would have wished "him three crowns rather than one." The Bishops who were excommunicated (thrown out of the Church) were done so by the Pope. The first Knight insists that it was done through Becket and he must amend the act by "absolving them." The first Knight says that the King's command is that Becket and his servants depart from the land: Becket replies that if this is the King's command then, it is seven years since he left his flock and he has lost those years. But, he says, this will never happen again, The first Knight tells Becket that in speaking like this he is insulting the King and Becket responds by saying that it is not him who insults the King "But the Law of Christ's Church, the judgment of Rome." The three Knights accuse Becket of treachery and treason and Becket says that he submits his cause to the judgement of Rome and if they kill him he will rise again to submit his cause to God. Becket exits. The four Knights feel that they should restore order in the king's land. They say that they have come with swords to implement the "King's justice,"

Critical Comments on the Above Passage The important thing to note about these passages is that the charges the Knights make against Becket are all false and baseless. Becket's integrity and calm contrasts with the Knights lack of integrity and their agitated condition. The accusations made by the Knights give a historical context to Becket's conflict with the King. When Becket says : It is not I who insult the King, And there is higher than I for the King It is not I, Becket from Cheapside. . . he is demonstrating how he has surrendered his will to that of God. "Not I" is repeated to highlight this. The egocentric "I" is given up. This passage clearly shows that Becket has overcome the fourth temptation the sin arising from pride. The above passages are also important because they show the church and State conflict clearly. The Knights view themselves as the King's men and Becket views himself as God's instrument.

10.5 Exercises

1. Outline Eliot's understanding of Christianity.
2. Critically comment on the significance of the Interlude (Becket's Christmas Sermon) to the play.
3. What is the notion of martyrdom that emerges in Becket's Christmas sermon?
4. Highlight the Christian paradoxes that Becket discusses in the Christmas Sermon.
5. Compare and contrast the two opening speeches of the Chorus in Parts I and II

Unit 11 General Comments and Other Readings Structure 11.0 Objectives 11.1 Critical Explanation of the Choric Outburst after Becket Exits upto his Murder. 11.2 Critical Explanation of the Knights, Prose Passages upto the end of the Play. 11.3 The Chorus in Development in Eliot's Play's. 11.4 Plays by Other Dramatists on Thomas Becket. 11.5 Greek / Medieval Models for Eliot's Play, Murder in the Cathedral. 11.6 Different Readings of Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral. 11.7 Select Bibliography with Critical Comments 11.8 Exercises 11.0. Objectives This Unit will: a) Complete the critical explanation of the play from the choric outburst upto Becket's murder. b) Critically explain the section starting with the Knight's prose passages upto the end of the play. c) Trace the development of the Chorus d) Discuss other dramatist's plays on Becket e) Point out the Greek / Medieval model' f) Give an account of other Readings of Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral g) Give a select bibliography with critical comments. 11.1. Critical Explanation of the Choric Outburst After Becket Exits Upto his Murder In this speech the Chorus perceives evil in the world through images like the "putrid flesh" of lobsters and oysters living and spawning in the "bowels," of death in the rose and the hollyhock. Animal images abound in their speech: rat, jackal, jackaw, jackdaw and ape. They see chaos in the universe. This is expressed through the fact that the order of time and creatures are abolished. The animal, food bird and sea imagery in their speech point to the widespread corruption in the world. In short, evil is contained not only in the knights. This is important because it points to the fact that Becket's martyrdom has cosmic dimensions. This is reinforced by their statement: "It was here, in the Kitchen, in the passages, / In the news in the barn in the lyre in the market- place / In our veins our bowels our Skulls as well," The "Poor Women" of Canterbury say that they have tasted death and now it is too late to repent and act. Finally, these women state that they have consented to their "animal powers" and have been "dominated by the lust of self-demolition." They plead with Becket to forgive them so that they can pray for him out of sense of their shame. They now acknowledge their collective guilt. This shows that they have grown. Before they had blamed Becket for the chaos but now they blame themselves. Critical Explanation of Becket's Speech Becket's first word, "Peace" parallels his use of the word in his first entrance in the play. But the word has a new dimension to it now. Peace now, no longer means silence, but a calm that emanates from being in touch with the "still point" which is God. Becket's lines:

These things had to come to you and you accept them, This is your share of the eternal burden, The perpetual glory. Touches upon the basic Christian paradox. That is, it is through accepting suffering and pain in this life that you get power and glory in the next. Becket further tells the Chorus that all the suffering and pain that they go through will fall into a pattern "When the figure of God's purpose is made complete." Once this happens, he tells the "poor women" of Canterbury, that all the "toiling in the household" will appear "unreal." He ends his speech by saying that "humankind cannot bear too much reality." This is a line from "Burnt Norton" which is part of The Four Quartets. What Becket means here is that human beings can only have a glimpse of the eternal truth. "Reality" stands for truth. We are not able to sustain our vision of reality because it is too overwhelming to us. When the Priests tell Becket to hide near the altar because the Knights will be returning armed to attack him, he tells them that he has been waiting all his life for this moment. He tells the Priests that "Death will come" not when he wills it but when God thinks that he is "worthy." Since this is the case, Becket says, "there is no danger. I have therefore only to make perfect my will."

The Priests in a panic tell Becket that the Knights are coming and tell him to "make haste." They fear for themselves saying, "if you are killed what shall become of us?" The lines spoken by the Priests demonstrate that they have not understood the meaning of Becket's martyrdom. Spiritual rebirth is individual. Becket has reached a stage of individuality. The Priests still function collectively as is expressed in their line to Becket: "What shall become of us?" In this context, the crowd represents "untruth" and the individual represents "truth." The Priests who represent institutionalized religion tell Becket to go Vespers which is a Church Service in the evening. They are still very ritualistic. Unlike Becket they have not understood God. Becket tells the Priests to go to Vespers and pray for him. He tells them that the Knights will find: the shepherd (that is him) and will spare the flock (that is the priests, Chorus etc) Becket says: "I have had a tremor of bliss, a wink of heaven a whisper, / And I would no longer be denied; all things / Proceed to a joyful consummation."

It is important to like Becket's phrase "I would no longer be denied" to the line in the first speech of the Chorus when they say, "Remember the martyrs and saints who wait and who shall / stretch out his hand to the fire, and deny his master?" Becket is saying that he will no longer be "denied" the role that he has to play. He says "all things? Proceed to a joyful consummation" which is his death by martyrdom. The Priests who are operating at a very different level, drag Becket away. They see Becket's approaching death as murder. Becket however, views it differently. At this point the Chorus speaks and a Dies Irae (the day of wrath) a hymn is sung in the background. This hymn is one of the greatest masterpieces of Medieval lyric poetry. General Comments and other readings The Choric speech at this point expresses the horror of the "poor women" which results from their sin of living in the void in a state of "emptiness, absence, separation from God." In the cathedral, the Priests tell each other to bar the door and that they will be "safe." The Priests here are like the Chorus in their opening speech in the play when they hide in the Cathedral for physical safety. What they have to learn is that physical safety has no meaning unless they are protected by God. This is the reason why Becket insists on the doors of the Church being left open. He tells the Priests that he does not want the Church to be turned into a "fortress." Becket, who has understood the true meaning of God says that "The Church shall protect her own, in her own way." The first Priest responds by saying that the Knights are not coming like people who will "kneel to the body of Christ / but like beasts." The beast image is important. It shows that the Knights are far removed from the still point, that is God. They have a long way to go to

reach Becket's state of understanding. In fact, the beastly nature of the Knights make us aware of the greater need of Becket's sacrifice through martyrdom to redeem people. Becket tells the Priests to unbar the door. He chides them saying that they may think that he's "reckless, desperate and mad" this is because they apply earthly standards and argue by "results" as this world does. He tells them:

It is not in time that my death shall be known; It is out of time that my decision is taken To which my whole being; gives consent. I

give my life To the law of God above the law of

Man. It requires a very special person to face a vision of nothingness on earth. Becket has achieved this. He privileges God's order over man's. His entire body, and soul have surrendered to God. Eliot believed that the values for which Becket gives his life are in essence permanent and therefore relevant to all times. Nevill Coghill gives a good commentary on these lines. He says "Thomas's argument is that when an act is looked at time, it can be assessed relatively to its motives and consequences, that is, it is a human action that partakes of both good and evil, as the world judges. To murder a man, not to say an Archbishop, is judged evil by the world, and therefore it would seem wrong for Becket to make such a murder possible by opening the doors. But if a martyrdom is "made by the design of God," it is an act made beyond Time, and bears an eternal witness. It is absolute and cannot be judged relatively. Becket's will is only involved in that he has identified it with or surrendered it to, the will of God." Becket once again tells

the Priests to "unbar" the doors of the Cathedral. He tells them that "we are not here to triumph by fighting, by strategies, or by resistance,

not to fight with beasts as men." He then tells them that the beast in them has already been conquered. He perhaps refers here to his own temptations. He says that death which follows it is "the easier victory." It is perceived as the fruit of all the suffering and pain. The Knights enter humiliating Becket the way Christ was humiliated before his death. They refer to the "mark of the beast" on him and the "blood of the lamb." This is a mockery of Revelation

XIX, 20 and VII 14. Their line "Come down Daniel and Join in the feast" is again a mocking allusion to Christ's last supper. Becket does not argue with the Knights but tells them that he is ready to shed his blood to pay for Christ's death. As the Knights tell Becket to make amends for the wrongs that he has done to the Bishops and the King, Becket says that he is "ready to die" for God, he tells them to do what they want with him but to spare his people. The Knights now collectively call him a traitor. To which Becket says to one of the Knights, Reginald, that he is thrice traitor. That is, to Becket whose man he was, to God and to the Church. Becket's last words express a total surrender of himself to God. He says that he gives himself up to God, the Virgin mother and all the prophets and saints. When the Knights kill Becket they do so by forming a circle with Becket at the centre. This is symbolic of the wheel and the still point. Tennyson in his play Becket, adopted the legend of a violent storm after the murder. Eliot gave the storm a symbolic treatment by introducing the Chorus'

cry, the Priests speeches etc. The Chorus, in its speech, protests wildly at the pollution of the natural order. All sense of time and place is lost, there is cosmic cacophony. They say, that they can no longer go on living quietly as they had done before. Although they have gone through suffering, "the personal loss, the general misery" they have never seen such chaos before. They say, this is out of life, this is out of time, / An instant eternity of evil and wrong." They now state that the whole world is clouded in "filth."

11.2. Critical Explanation of The Knight's Prose Passages Up to the End After the Knights murder Becket, they address the audience in prose. Eliot follows history up to the martyrdom of Becket and then he makes a jump into the twentieth century. He says that he deliberately did this to shock the audience out of their complacency. In his prose passages, Eliot was influenced by Shaw's St. Joan. In a sense, the Knights by addressing the audience politicise the murder of Becket. The first Knight, Reginald Fitz Urse, is the leader of the group. He tells the audience that since they are English they will listen to both sides of the story which is in keeping with their long established principle of trial by Jury. This was introduced by Henry II. Reginald asks Baron William de Traci the eldest member to speak first. We are given various angles to the murder through the Knights speeches. The third Knight, who is the eldest, says that whatever they have done they have done so, "disinterestedly." By this they do not mean surrendering of their will to God but being "non-partisan." The second Knight, Sir Hugh de Morville, speaks next and tells the audience that he agrees with William de Traci and that they did what they did for the good of the country. He says, "Had Becket concurred with the King's wishes; we should have had an almost ideal state: union of spiritual and temporal administration, under the central government." He tells the people to "appeal not to [their] emotions but to [their] reason." He concludes his speech by saying that the Knights "have served [the] interests" of the people. But it is important to note that Becket has also served their interests in his death. He has died to save the people from sins. The fourth Knight, Richard Brito, speaks next. His speech is important because he refers to Becket's death as the senseless self slaughter of a lunatic, an egotistic man who had "determined upon a death by martyrdom." It is this Knight who renders the verdict on Becket of "suicide while of Unsound Mind." Obviously, the Knights perceive Becket as one conquering the last temptation of pride. The closing lines of the first Knight's speech which advises people to go home quietly and not to "loiter in groups at street corners" point to their fear of public outbreak against the Archbishop's murder. Perhaps this is why the Knights find the need to give an explanation to the audience. The first Priest's lament after Becket's murder about the church lying "bereft / Alone, desecrated, desolated," expresses the fact that he has not understood the meaning of Becket's death. The third Priest on the other hand says "the Church is stronger for this action." He then tells the Knights: "Go, weak sad men, lost erring souls, / homeless in earth or / heaven." It is this third Priest who thanks God for giving them another "Saint in Canterbury." The Last Choric Speech The last Choric speech celebrates the meaning life has obtained through Becket's martyrdom. We see a sea change in the Chorus from fear to glory recognising God's ways. Their earlier outburst which spoke about polluted images in the cosmos is now all cleansed through Becket's death. They see a comic pattern now: "Thy creatures, both the hunters and the hunted / For all things exist only as seen by thee, only as known by / Thee, all things exist / Only in thy Light." The "poor women" of Canterbury have understood the meaning of the still point. They have understood that human beings whom God has made "must consciously praise thee, in thought and in word and in deed." That is, they must surrender themselves totally to God. In the light of this understanding, the activities of cleaning the hearth" and "scrubbing" and "sweeping" all become meaningful. That the chorus has developed is seen in their accepting responsibility for Becket's death. "We acknowledge our trespass, our weakness, our fault; we acknowledge / That the sin of the world is upon our heads: that the blood / of the martyrs and the agony of the saints / Is upon our heads." They end their speech by asking God for mercy and Thomas to pray for them. 11.3 The Chorus in Development in Eliot's Plays It is necessary to note at the outset itself that Eliot's use of the choral passages were linked with his own voice. That is, the first voice (See Eliot's Three Voices of Poetry) viz, the poet talking to himself. Eliot's use of the Chorus can be Traced back to "Fragment of the Agon" which was published in 1927. It forms part of Eliot's *Samson Agonistes* now, But, it was his eight choral speeches in *The Rock* - -which he was commissioned to write for the Canterbury Festival—that demonstrated Eliot's talent in innovatively adapting the Greek Chorus to modern times. About this Chorus, the critic of *The Church Times* said "The great achievement of *The Rock* is the Chorus. Mr. Eliot is greater as a poet than he is experienced as a dramatist, and he has put the best of his writing into the poetry of the choric comments on religion and

life." (1 June, 1934) The Chorus in *The Rock* consisted of males and females. They wore masks and were very stylised in their movements. Eliot relied entirely on Elsie Fogerty, Principal of the Central School of Speech and Drama, and her colleague Gwynneth Thurbum for coordinating the Chorus. Thurbum, in fact, succeeded Miss Fogerty as the principal of the school. She was the person who did most of the voice work in the school. She said, "It so happened that we had a particularly good set of girl speakers who had that year done very well at the Oxford Verse-Speaking Festival. ...They responded well, and I think Eliot was impressed; anyway we decided that was what he wanted" Thurbum further adds that in those days drama schools were not there. It was only after world war II that formal training centres in drama sprang up. Due to the war years men who joined these schools had a much shorter course, sometime as short as two months as compared to the two year required course that women attended. The results were obvious. Women were much better voice trained than the men. Thurbum says, "The girls had a longer and more secure background of training to rely upon, and they therefore constituted a better team." Eliot's use of the all women Chorus in *Murder in the Cathedral* is entirely due to the fact that in asking for girls from Fogerty's school, he would get the best. In *The Family Reunion* the chorus comprised of two sisters and two brothers-in-law. Their role in general is static and they do not advance the action in the play. The Chorus, in *Murder in the Cathedral*, according to Pieter D. Williams "suggests the collectivity, the generality of mankind, as distinct from its outstanding individual members Thomas Becket or Henry II." He adds, "the stasis of the chorus, compared with the movement, sometime violent, of other characters and groups of characters, help to isolate them visually in the kaleidoscope of power politics and reinforces another salient theme: the permanence of common humanity, the impermanence of political systems ... The Chorus has learned a stoical submission to life,.... something which Thomas when the play begins has yet to learn." He has to be submissive without the fear of the Chorus. Williams also talks of the importance of the vocal role played by the Chorus that it provides a symphony of female voices, a balanced antithesis to male voices of the Priests, Messenger, Archbishop, Tempters, and Knights. ... The other functions of the Chorus is to give details of time, place, action complementing abstract situations. William says, the Chorus "is used to telescope into ninety minutes the last twenty seven days of Becket's life by suggesting the passage of time." About the Chorus in *Murder in the Cathedral*, McGill says, "In staging of *Murder in the Cathedral* there are interpretive problems of the presentation of the choral speeches. Textually they appear as odes with no specific instructions to indicate differentiation of voices. But the first starting of the play set the precedent for assigning parts within the choral odes to individual voices or varying ensembles." It is important to note that in the first part of the play, we the audience empathise with the Chorus in the Interlude we become one with them and in the second part they lead us and guide us as to how we should respond to Becket's murder. They invite us to join them in the *Te Deum*.

11.4 Plays by Other Dramatists on Thomas Becket Alfred Tennyson, T.S. Eliot, Jean Anouilh and Christopher Fry have all written-on Thomas Becket. All four writers use the same historical facts but write about them from different perspectives. What all these writers exploit in their works is the friendship that Becket had with King Henry II when he was a Chancellor. Anouilh uses this perspective in his play, *Becket* (1959). In this play, Henry II is hurt by Becket's behaviour after he becomes the Archbishop. He emerges as strongly as Becket for sympathy. He cannot understand why Becket has assumed a new allegiance, the honour of God, which is also the subtitle of the play. Christopher Fry, in his play *Curtmantle* (1961) gives even greater prominence to King Henry II. One of the themes listed by Fry as treated in his play is "a progression toward a portrait of Henry." King Henry II is portrayed in this play as a man who is surrounded by anarchy and chaos and wants order in his Kingdom. The "crown / and the croney" are seen to be working together towards that end. In this play Becket is not as militant in his approach to the King as in Anouilh's play. In fact, he works for the King humbly acknowledging the fact that "there would be no Becket, without the King" and that he is "the King's representative." The King too, in appointing Becket as Archbishop is not influenced by his friendship with him but by the fact that he will be able to stabilize the realm. When Becket after becoming the Archbishop chooses God over the King, Henry is hurt not so much by personal betrayal but for the cause of the nation. In maintaining the stability of the nation he feels that even powers that traditionally belonged to the church should be used which the Archbishop does not accept. Eleanor, King Henry's wife says that issues and personalities have got intertwined. Eleanor's role in Fry's *Curtmantle* is interesting. She is the former French Queen now married to a British King. She has respect for Becket at a personal level and as a statesman. She is different from Tennyson's Eleanor who is directly responsible for the murder of Becket. Tennyson's play *Becket* was written in 1879 but was staged only in 1893. In Tennyson's *Becket* the conflict between Henry's II and Becket is given focus. Becket's insistence on privileging God before King becomes almost an obsession. Tennyson's plot is complicated by a sub plot involving Henry's mistress Rosamund. This sub plot intersects with the main plot in the animosity that Eleanor, the Queen, shows to Rosamund and also by Rosamund's own spurning of the attention she gets from the four Knight's who later murder Becket. However, Rosamund's role in prompting the King to declare what he says about Becket which brings on the murder is clearly seen in Tennyson's play. The Rosamund sub plot confuses the main issue between the King and Becket unlike in the other plays by Fry, Anouilh and Eliot.

Eliot's handling of the Becket issue is different. He focuses on the events that took place in December. This enables him to focus on an issue rather than have a panoramic view of history. Eliot's handling of the Chorus and his theme of martyrdom are also noteworthy. Again, it is important to note that all these four writers go to different models for their work. Eliot, for instance, uses Classical Greek and Medieval Morality plays. These plays were very ritualistic. Fry is Shavian in his panoramic and historical view. Anouilh says that Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* had an impact on his work. His work is more musical. Interestingly, both Eliot and Fry are Christians and do not appear as existentialist as Anouilh whose Becket refuses to accept any standard other than his own: "I was a man without honour" he says, and "suddenly I found it." If Eliot's play ends with the Chorus understanding the meaning of Becket's martyrdom, Fry's *Curtmantle* ends with the terror of destruction of Henry's realm and family. Anouilh's Becket ends with the ironic compromises, the union of King's and God's honour. Anouilh is more secular, and more radical in his treatment of Becket than Eliot and Fry. 11.5 Greek and Medieval Models for Eliot's *Murder In The Cathedral* Eliot was acutely aware of the fact that his play was to be performed like Greek tragedy. His play was celebrating a cultic event near the site of the murder of Becket. Eliot aimed at writing a "neutral" verse like the kind used in *Everyman* but he also made modernist use of an abrupt transition to modern dialogue like G.B. Shaw's last scene in *St. Joan* when Eliot's four Knights defend themselves to the audience. Though Eliot did not consciously develop this play of a Greek dramatic model (as he did each of his subsequent plays), Leoaylen calls the play "most near in spirit to Greek tragedy, of all the plays written in English or French this century. It is formally similar; it uses a myth in the same way as the Greek tragedies did, and the myth bears the same relation to the religion of Eliot's audience as the myths of the Greek poets did to their audience's religion. It is based on ritual, and the action is carried out principally by the Chorus, not by an actor. It was performed at a festival, not before a theatre going public." Eliot has openly stated that for the versification of his play he used the medieval play, *Everyman*.

Nevill Coghill says: 'Everyman is a version, from the late fifteenth century, of a Dutch original called *Elckerlijc*. It tells of how God, perceiving that 'all people be to me unkind,' sends death to summon Everyman before him: he is to bring his Book of Accounts with him. Everyman begs for a respite and tries to persuade his friends his Kinsmen and his Goods to go with him, but they all refuse. His Good-Deeds, however, are willing to stand by him, through death and after. Everyman confesses his sins, takes the last Sacrament, and creeps into the grave to die. Thereupon a Angel announces 'great joy and melody' above in Heaven, 'where Everyman's soul received shall be.' Its versification is extremely irregular, at least in comparison with that of the earlier *Miracle and Morality* plays which, nevertheless, it partly imitates. The lines are of varying length and have a varying number of stresses; there is a good deal of rhyme and there are touches of alliteration. Coghill goes on to say that a typical Everyman like passage in *Murder in the Cathedral* might be: Your thoughts have more power than Kings to compel you. (4) You have also thought,/sometimes/at your prayers, (4) Sometimes hesitating sat the angles of Stairs, (4) etc. The "total effect" Coghill states, "is one of living movement and emphatic speech, that tumbles as if by accident on to the happy rhythmical phrase and compulsive rhyme, unforeseeably, and yet with gratification of a certain indefinable expectancy. These effects of verse are greatly enhanced by the intercalation of the two great prose scenes of the Sermon and the Knights' apology, which provide their reasoned contrasts to the rest of the dialogue, where feeling predominates." 11.6 Different Readings of Eliot's *Murder In The Cathedral* Murder in the Cathedral as: a) Poetic Drama b) Christian Play

c) Integration of Eliot's Dramatic Theories d) Biographical Play e) Feminist Reading (a) *Murder in the Cathedral* as a POETIC DRAMA Poetic form, Eliot felt, is the most apt form of expression in the theatre. In his view, Ibsen, Strindberg, and Chekov were true poets who felt hampered with the limits of prose. In contrast to them are Yeats and Hofmannsthal, who kept alive the ancient and traditional affinity between drama and poetry. In "The Music of Poetry" (1942) Eliot acknowledges his bias in favour of the poetry to which he was indebted as a poet, and says that the music of poetry is not independent of the meaning. The meaning of poetry is sometimes beyond the poet's intentions. He saw possibilities of theme recurrence and transitions in poetry as in music, and thought the concert hall more likely to quicken poetry than the opera house. He said that without poets of unusual sensibility and command of language, culture will deteriorate. "Poetry and Drama" is notable for the retrospective attention Eliot gives to his own development as a playwright, he finds that he has been writing variations on the theme of poetic drama throughout his career. For Eliot the highest aim of poetic drama is to bring us to the border of those feelings which are expressible only in music, without leaving the everyday world of dramatic action. (b) *Murder in the Cathedral* as a CHRISTIAN PLAY Stephen Spender's "Martyrdom and Motive" states that "The true theme of Eliot's plays written after his conversion is the discovery by heroes of their religious vocation. It is required of the hero that he perfect his will so as to make it conform completely with the will of God." In *Murder in the Cathedral*, according to Spender, these aims are revealed in a very pure state." Stevie Smith finds the play "a remarkable evocation of Christian fears." He adds that, it should not be forgotten that Eliot had initially considered calling the play, *Fear in the Way*. Smith argues that *Murder in the Cathedral* is "remarkable for the strength of these fears and the horrible beauty in which they are dressed." According to Smith, Eliot perceived modern times as shallow and meaningless. The play with its religious direction was perhaps written as an antidote to the

times. The entire play can be seen as based on the Christian notion of history. Unlike traditional history, Christian history is not linear. It can be described as providentially oriented history of salvation. It starts with the creation and moves towards the last day of judgement when God will come in all his power and glory to sift the good from the bad. In Christ the eternal enters the temporal intersecting the timeless with time, creating a paradox in time. This paradox will only be resolved in God. The preference of Christian dramatists for paradoxical imagery draws its justification from this fact. Saints and martyrs are also like Christ, but on a different scale. In this sense the History of Salvation confronts everyman with the same religious duties to fulfill. Everyman becomes every man whose soul becomes a battlefield for Good and Evil to gain supremacy. It is in the history of the salvation of the world and the soul that Christian history unfolds itself. The play has also been read as following the structure of a Catholic mass: a. Introductory rites b. Preparation for the gifts to the Eucharist c. Eucharistic Prayer d. Communion rite e. Concluding rite (c) Murder in the Cathedral as Eliot's most successful integration of his DRAMATIC THEORIES. In Poetry and Drama Eliot states that the subject matter of Murder in the Cathedral was well suited for verse drama. Interestingly, though he states that a verse drama should be entirely in verse, he justifies the two prose sections by saying that Becket's sermon would not be convincing if it had been in verse. The Knights he said, were made to speak prose to shock the audience out of their complacency. Marianne Moore states: "one may merely mention the appropriateness of verse to subject matter.... Mr. Eliot steps so reverently as the solemn ground he has essayed, that austerity assumes the dignity of philosophy and the didacticism of the verities incorporated in the play becomes impersonal and persuasive." Caro'. H. Smith is also of the opinion that Murder in the Cathedral integrates very effectively Eliot's dramatic theories. She says, "the levels of the play are intrinsically unified by the skillful interweaving of Thomas' story with the imagery of Christ's Temptation and Passion and with the prototype formula of all religion and drama. The hierarchy of characters within the play who perceive the meaning of Thomas' death on their various levels helps to tighten the unity of the drama and to give it the stylized quality Eliot admires from a fear of spiritual realities and a disavowal of responsibilities to acceptance of and participation in both the sin and glory of martyrdom, Eliot has provided a highly effective vehicle for commentary on the action and participation in it. (d) Murder in the Cathedral as BIOGRAPHICAL In The Making of T.S. Eliot's Plays Martin Browne states that Eliot found in the Becket story something eternal: "at the moment when he was called upon to write his play, he found that the basic conflict of the twentieth century came very near to repeating that of the twelfth." Browne also sees the rise of fascism in the 1930s as a serious form of social threat that Becket fights in his play. Such an approach is also corroborated by Ashley Dukes in "T.S. Eliot in the Theatre." He says, "Other things conspired to remind us of the play's actuality; indeed it was never allowed to become historical drama for a moment. Hitler had been long enough in power to ensure that the four knightly murderers of Becket would be recognized as figures of the day, four perfect Nazis defending their act on the most orthodox totalitarian grounds. Echoes of one war and forebodings of another resounded through the sultry afternoon." Interestingly, King Edward the VIII abdicated his throne during the play's West End production which according to Dukes refer to the lines about the King's transient power. Peter Ackroyd argues that the hero of Murder in the Cathedral, Becket, shares the writer's first name. This is not a mere coincidence. Lyndall Gordon, in his book Eliot's New Life, focuses on the biographical study of Eliot from the late 1920s to the end of Eliot's life, notes several autobiographical overtones in Murder in the Cathedral. He says that Eliot found in Becket "a model who was not so different from himself. Here was a man to all appearances not born for sainthood, a man of the world Who moved from worldly success into spiritual danger...

Eliot said that a bit of the author may be the germ of a character, but that, too, a certain character may call out latent potentialities in the author. Murder in the Cathedral was a biographical play that had its impact on Eliot in shifting the balance of his new life from the shared course of love to the course of religious trial." (

e) A FEMINIST READING of *Murder on the Cathedral* Such a reading would focus on Eliot's all women Chorus which comprises of the "poor women" of Canterbury. Guilt and submissiveness which mark the growth of the Chorus in the Christian framework of the play, are viewed as negative qualities according to the feminist perspective. Feminists argue that women under patriarchy have always suffered from a deep sense of guilt and it is this guilt that has stood in the way of their having a sense of "self-worth." Similarly, with "submissiveness." Under patriarchy, submissiveness implies surrendering to male domination which feminists perceive as being inherently destructive to women. For another feminist reading of the play, see *Feminist theory and Modern Drama* edited by Taisha Abraham (Delhi: Pencraft International, 1997) In giving a feminist reading of *Murder in the Cathedral*, however, one should remember that Eliot chose an all women Chorus for his play not keeping the gender issue in mind, but because he wanted the best trained voices from Ms. Fogerty's Central School of Speech and Drama. 11.7 Select Bibliography with Critical Comments Abraham, Taisha. ed. *Feminist theory and Modern Drama*. New Delhi: Pencraft International, 1997 (The essay on *Murder in the Cathedral* entitled, "Writing in Ourselves" by Zakia Pathak discusses the pedagogical practice of teaching a text from the west in our Indian universities. It highlights, in particular, the church/state conflict in the Ayodhyan context and critically examines the position of women in this debate.) Brooker, Spears Jewel. Ed. *Approaches to Teaching Eliot's Poetry and Plays*. NY: MLA of America, 1988. (The principle objective of this book is to put together different points of view on teaching a particular literary work. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* is discussed in some detail pointing out to different philosophies and approaches to the text.)

The Placing of T.S. Eliot. Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 1991. (The essays in the volume originated as invited lectures for the T.S. Eliot society which has its headquarters in St. Louis, the poet's birthplace. Some essays in the collection are historical while others focus on language. A few of the essays deal with Eliot's eastward move from the slums of the turn-of-the century river town in the heart of the American midwest to the more metropolitan river town of Boston and then to river based urban capitals like London and Paris.)

Browne, E. Martin. *The Making of T.S. Eliot's Plays*. Cambridge:

CUP, 1969. (This book is very important in showing how Eliot's plays came to be written and of their first stage appearance. Much of the contents are from Eliot's own writings.) Chiari, Joseph. *T.S. Eliot Poet and Dramatist* NY: Harper and Row, 1972. (Eliot's artistic and social background are traced in this book which also studies his poems and plays.)

Clark, R. David. Ed. *Twentieth Century Interpretation of Murder in the Cathedral*. N.J.: Prentice-Hall; Inc. 1971. (Divided, into two sections, the book deals with various aspects of Eliot's play, *Murder in the Cathedral*. Written by well known scholars, the essays cover the notion of action and suffering in Christian terms, the notion of the stillpoint and Becket as the biblical character, Job.)

Malamud, Randy. *T.S. Eliot's Drama: A Research and Production Source Book*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1992. (

The book provides a good background to his dramas. The introduction surveys Eliot's literary works and maps his move from poetry to drama.) Seed, David. "Eliot's use of Tennyson in *Murder in the Cathedral*." *Yeats/Eliot Review* 7. 1-2 (1982): 42-49.

(Does a comparative study of Tennyson's Becket and Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*.) Sochaloff, A. Fred. "Four Variations on the Becket theme in Modern Drama" *Modern Drama* 12.1 * May 1969): 83-97-1. (Compared to dramatizations of the same historical event by Fry, Anouilh and Tennyson, *Murder in the Cathedral* is the most austere and unified; Eliot concentrates on Becket's state of mind and his martyrdom by excluding characters such as King Henry II.) Williams, Pieter D. "

The Function of

the Chorus in T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*. "

American Benediction Review 23-4 (1972): 499-511. (This book exhaustively explores the role of the Chorus in terms of its dramatic, structural, visual and vocal contribution to *Murder in the Cathedral*, and the formal and thematic contrast of its stasis compared to Becket's change and action.) 11.8 Exercises 1. Do you think that the development in the Chorus reflects the growth in Becket? 2. Critically analyse the importance of the Knights speeches. 3. Briefly comment on Eliot's use of Greek and Medieval sources for his play, *Murder in the Cathedral*. 4. Attempt a feminist reading of the play. 5. Discuss *Murder in the Cathedral* as a Christian play. 6. Trace the development of Becket's martyrdom in the play

Unit 12 THE WASTE LAND 12.1 Objectives 12.2 An Introduction to The Waste Land 12.3 The Mythical Background 12.4 The Vegetation and Fertility Myths 12.5 Mythical Background of Tiresias and his Significance in The Waste Land 12.6 The Biblical Wasteland

12.1 Objectives The objective of this lesson is to discuss the mythical and biblical background of The Waste Land. 12.2 An Introduction to The Waste Land Eliot's immediate waste land is the world, as he saw it, after the First World War. The 'Waste' is not, however of the war's deviation and bloodshed, but the emotional and spiritual sterility of western man, the 'Waste' of our civilization. Eliot does not regard this as a single moment in history, particular to the West in the twentieth century, and the poem is organized to present an inclusive, comparative vision, a perspective of history in which (by succinct allusions and references) twentieth century forms of belief and disbelief of culture and of life are kept in a continuous and critical relationship with those of the past. The Waste Land was written during the autumn of 1921, in Lausanne, Switzerland, when Eliot was preoccupied partly with the ruin of post-war Europe, partly with his own health and the conditions of his servitude to a bank in London. The poem was first published in a serial form in The Criterion in October and November, 1922, However, before publishing it the poet sent a rough draft of it to Ezra Pound, who suggested far-reaching modifications. It had for epigraph a phrase from Conrad's Heart of Darkness ("The Horror! The Horror!") In Paris that winter, Ezra Pound has recalled, "The Waste Land was placed before me as a series of poems. I advised him what to leave out," Pound dissuaded Eliot from installing Gerontion as a prelude to the sequence, forbade him to delete "phlebas the Phoenician," and nagged about the Conrad epigraph until a better one was discovered in Petronius.

The Waste Land is a five-parted work of four hundred and thirty-four lines, with sudden wrenching juxtapositions, thematic links between section and section, fragments quoted from several languages with no one present to whose mind they can occur. It has a very dense textual unity. There are diverse opinions about The Waste Land. Louis Untermeyer calls it a "set of separate poems..... a piece of literary carpentry, scholars joiner's work.... a pompous parade in erudition." While there are critics like F.R. Leavis, Matthiessen and Cleanth Brooks whose interpretations have proved The Waste Land as a highly compressed epic of modern age. 12.3 The Mythical Background The theme of the poem is the salvation of the Waste Land, not as a certainty but a possibility: of emotional, spiritual and intellectual vitality to be regained. Eliot develops this theme drawing upon related patterns in nature, myth and religion: the cycle of the seasons; the ancient fertility myths of Egypt, India and Greece, in which the god must die to be re-born, to bring fertility to the soil and potency to the people; a pattern present in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. In his notes to the poem, Eliot refers us to From Ritual to Romance (1920) by Jessie Weston. This book provided Eliot with a coherent shape for the mass of intricate material that enters into his poem. It gave to his mind the very fillip, which it needed to crystallize. What he learned especially from it was the recurring pattern in various myths, the

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basic resemblance, for example, between the vegetation myths of the rebirth of the year, the fertility myths of the rebirth of the potency of man, the Christian story of Resurrection, and the Grail legend of purification.

Eliot made particular use of Jessie Weston's account of the Fisher King, a figure which recurs in a number of fertility myths, and whose story is one of obvious relevance to this poem. His land is under a curse and lay waste. The Fisher King is impotent, by illness or maiming, and his people are likewise infertile. The curse can only be lifted by the arrival of a stranger who must put or answer certain ritual questions. Eliot relates this myth to the legend of the Grail. The Grail was the cup used by Christ at the Last Supper and in which Joseph of Arimathea caught the blood from the wound made in Christ's side at crucifixion and brought it to the Glastonbury in the West of England. The Grail was there for ever regarded as a supremely holy Christian relic. It was lost and the search for the Grail became a powerful narrative image of man's search of spiritual truth, an image used by many medieval writers. The searcher of the Grail is a knight, whose quest takes him to the chapel perilous where he must (like the stranger in the Fisher King myth) put certain questions about the Grail and another holy relic, the Lance that pierced Christ's side. When this is done, the plight of the land and the people is eased. 12.4 The Vegetation and Fertility Myths Eliot also refers to his other major anthropological source. The Golden Bough (12 volumes, 1890- 1915) by Sir James Frazer, an encyclopedic study of primitive myth, presenting a possible line of continuity from these origins, through organized religion to modern scientific thought.

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In his notes to The Waste Land, Eliot referred to it as a work 'Which has influenced our generation profoundly'. Frazer'

s researches showed that the myth underlying primitive fertility cults in different cultures and historical epochs was that of the dying and resurrected god. The main lines of the myth are invariable. The God is young and beautiful, the lover of a great Goddess and the victim of a tragic and untimely death. After his death, the god passes to the land of the dead, which is usually underground. His death is bitterly mourned because it brings loss and misfortune upon the world. Then for the salvation of the land, the god is either rescued or resurrected into the land of the living by his beloved, or else an agreement is made that he will spend half his time in each of the two realms. According to Frazer, the god was a vegetation deity and his death and resurrection enacted the annual cycle of the change of seasons. Eliot drew particularly on Frazer's account of the vegetation ceremonies in part IV, the two volumes treating the deities Adonis, Attis, Osiris: these ceremonies were rituals of sacrifice to conciliate the powers of nature and ensure the continuing cycle of the season, with the life of the new year to be born again out of the old. This vegetation ceremony has been referred to in the opening lines of *The Burial of the Dead*. Symbolically, this recurrent pattern of birth and death stood for spiritual death as a result of sin and sexual perversion, and spiritual regeneration, the result of suffering and penance. This recurrent pattern has been taken over in the Christian myth, in the birth of Christ, his crucifixion, and his resurrection.

12.5 Mythical Background of Tiresias and his significance in *The Waste Land* Eliot gives a note on Tiresias, which offers to supply the poem with a nameable point of view: "Tiresias, although a mere spectator and

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not indeed a "character", is yet the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest.

Just as the one-eyed merchant, seller of currants melts into the Phoenician sailor, and the later is not wholly distinct from Ferdinand Prince of Naples, so all the women are one woman, and the two sexes meet in Tiresias.

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What Tiresias sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem."

The significance of Tiresias is complex and varied. Historically, he is connected with the story of king Oedipus of Thebes, which is clearly and demonstrably the classical legend of a wasteland, with striking resemblances to the drought infested sin-ridden kingdom of the medieval Fisher King. Eliot refers to the prophetic powers and bisexuality of Tiresias, quoting the Latin text of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which tells this legend: Tiresias came across two snakes copulating in a forest. He hit them with his staff and was turned into a woman. Seven years later he saw the same two snakes and hit them again. As he had hoped, he was turned back into a man. On account of Tiresias's male and female experience, Jove called him as an expert witness to settle a quarrel with his wife Juno. Jove was arguing that in love the woman enjoys the greater pleasure; Juno argued that it was the other way round. Tiresias supported Jove. Out of spite Juno blinded him. To make up for this, Jove gave him the power of prophecy, and long life. In the myth, Tiresias was successfully male and female. In *The Waste Land* he is specifically hermaphroditic. In this representation of Tiresias Eliot is also aware of other legends associated with him. One legend attributes Tiresias's blindness and prophetic powers to Athena, whom he saw bathing. Being a friend of his mother, Athena, instead of killing, made him blind and prophetic, thereby pre-empting anyone believing that he had seen her nude. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus is sent to Hades to consult Tiresias as to the manner of his returning home to Ithaca. Tiresias 'walked among the lowest of the dead' and evaded predicting Odysseus' homecoming, and Odysseus was somehow satisfied with it, and did get home, for a while. In *Oedipus Tyrannus* by Sophocles, Tiresias is the blind, withered prophet who knows that Thebes has been cursed because of Oedipus's patricide and subsequent incestuous marriage to his mother, despite the fact of his ignorance of the identity of both parents. As a result, Thebes has been turned into a wasteland.

the people and the land are infertile. Dante placed Tiresias in hell with augurs and diviners who, because they wished to peer into the secrets of the future, have their faces turned so that they can only go backwards, because looking forward was denied to them. In *The Waste Land* Tiresias is associated with the Sibyl of the epigraph through his longevity and gift of prophecy. In some versions of the myth Tiresias has a special staff to guide him in his blindness. This staff and that with which he struck the serpents, connect him with "the man with three staves" of the Tarot pack and with the Fisher King. Tiresias's sterility, too ('old man with wrinkled female breasts') links him symbolically with the Fisher King. His bisexuality highlights the theme of the mobility and indeterminacy of sexual identity. Tiresias is the fittest symbol of human consciousness itself, the accumulated experience and knowledge of the race acquired during its long and devious passage through the immense stretch of time. He is the enlightened ghost of the age, watching the depressing spectacle of modern humanity, which has fallen from the ancient heights and forgotten old values and sanctities. He is at once a relic of the past and as inhabitant of the present, at once a prophet and detached spectator of the agonizing drama of contemporary history and a participator and fellow sufferer, with a superior insight into the meaning of the ghostly masquerade, miscalled human life. Psychologically speaking, he is the conscience of humanity, banished and disowned by thoughtless men and women, but still strong enough to prick the bubbles of their illusions, joys, hopes and fears. Tiresias provides unity to *The Waste Land*. He is a connecting link between all the sections. But for his presence throughout, the poem would have become a phantasmagoria, a nightmare, a medley of scenes and meaningless snatches of talk 'almost overwhelming in its confused impression. Tiresias mixes the past with the present and through symbols, the distance of time and space is destroyed.

12.6 The Biblical Wasteland After discussing two wastelands, the wasteland of King Fisher and the wasteland of king Oedipus of Thebes, the third Biblical Wasteland or evil land of Emmaus, needs to be discussed in detail. The Biblical Wasteland is mentioned in Ecclesiastes and Ezekiel parts of the old testament. The prophet Ezekiel warns his followers to remember god and give up worshipping of idols. Their sins have laid the country waste and regeneration will come only when they return to god. These three wastelands form the mythical background to the contemporary wasteland. In this way, Eliot has linked up the past with present, and universalized the tropical. These myths have been used as "objective correlatives" to depersonalize his emotions and they have provided impersonality to the poem.

12.7 Suggested Readings 1. *The Art of T. S. Eliot* by Helen Gardner 2. *The Poetry of T. S. Eliot* by D. E. S. Maxwell 3. *T. S. Eliot, His mind and art* by A. G. George 4. *T. S. Eliot, A Collection of Critical Essays* by Hugh Kenner

Unit 13 *The Waste Land* (Section-Wise Critical analysis)-I 13.1 Objectives 13.2 The Title of the Poem 13.3 The Epigraph 13.4

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The Burial of the Dead 13.5 A Game of Chess 13.6 The Fire			

Serman 13.1 Objectives The objective of this lesson is to explain the Section wise summary of *The Waste Land* discussing first three part of the poem. 13.2 The Title of the Poem Eliot probably took this title from *Morte d'Arthur* by Thomas Malory, where the words have a significant context within the story of Galahad (Book 17, Ch 3, in Caxton's text: 'And so befell great pestilence and great harm to both Realms for since then increased neither corn, no grass, nor well no fruit, in the water was a fish, wherefore men called hit the lands of the two marches the wasteland for that dolorous stroke.' It could be a double allusion, since 'a wasteland' closes Book II of the *Confessions* of St. Augustine, to which Eliot refers in his notes to lines 307 and 300: 'I wandered, O my God, too much astray from Thee my stay, in these days of my youth, and I became to my self a wasteland' Beyond these literary sources, there could also have been a much more immediate suggestion in the back numbers of *Poetry* in which, 'Prufrock' was first published in June 1915. Two years earlier, in the issue for January 1913, there had appeared a 'Wasteland' by Madison Cawein, a poem, whose desolate landscape, like Eliot's, communicates spiritual desolation, and whose imagery and themes are also similar. 13.3 The Epigraph The Epigraph of the poem has been taken from the *Satyricon*, a satire by the Roman Writer Petronius (1st Century AD). The poem narrates the story of the Sibyl of Cumae. In Greek mythology the Sibyls were women of prophetic powers, that of Cumae the most famous. She was granted long life by Apollo, at her own wish, as many years as she held grains in her hand; but carelessly she forgot to ask for eternal youth. Hence, she aged and her prophetic authority declined. Now she longed for death. Translated into English, the Epigraph means: 'For once I saw with my very own eyes the Sibyl at Cumae hanging in a cage, and when the boys said to her, "Sibyl, what do you want?" she answered "I want to die." Trimalchio in the *Satyricon* speaks these words. The speaker is drunkenly boasting, trying to surpass his drunken companions in their tales of wonder. The Epigraph

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introduces the theme of death-in-life. In her role as prophetess and in her position as tapped spectator the Sibyl is associated with Tiresias in the poem.

In the decline of her prophetic powers the

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Sibyl is associated with Madame Sosostri in the poem. 13.4 The

Burial of the Dead The opening section of the Waste Land is titled 'The Burial of the Dead.' It refers to (a) The Burial of the dead fertility God (b) the burial service for the dead performed by the Christian church. 'The Order of the Burial of the Dead' is full title of the Burial service in the Church of England. In both the cases death is believed to be followed by rebirth. But the inhabitants of the contemporary waste land are spiritually dead and this stirring of the life and return of fertility is as painful to the waste landers, for it reminds them of their spiritual death and need for spiritual regeneration. "They dislike to be roused from their death-in-life" (Cleanth Brooks). Their values are all topsy-turvy. April is the cruelest month for modern waste landers. The account of April is a contrast to the general prologue to The Canterbury Tales by Chaucer (1343-1400) which is conventionally energetic and cheerful in accordance with the traditional treatment of 'Spring'. Thus the coming of April with its refreshing rain is resented. Up out of the incantation beaks a woman's voice, giving tongue to the ethnological confusions of the new Europe. There is a light chat between two inhabitants of the Waste Land, perhaps overheard and remembered by Tiresias, or perhaps he himself is one of the speakers. One of the two is a German princess Marie. She is a globetrotter representing regressive thrills and objectless travels, symbolizing the rootlessness of the modern man. She is separated not only from the life of a nation, but also from that other natural unit, the family, for her memories involve neither father nor mother, only a holiday at a cousin's. In winter they go south in search of pleasure and physical comforts. The shower of rain surprises her, she seeks shelter from it, as she is unaware of its purifying and fertilizing significance. "In the mountains there, you feel free," speaks of the spiritual bankruptcy, deracinated ardour, and an illusion of liberty, which is no more than impatience with human society and relief at a temporary change. Tiresias is surveying the panorama of modern civilization and finds it spiritually barren and dead. The entire passage is closely reminiscent of the parts titled Ezekiel and Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament. God shows his prophet Ezekiel a vision of desolation and addresses him, 'Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.' Ezekiel is told of his mission, to preach the coming of the Messiah to the rebellious, unbelieving people. The "son of man" is moving tirelessly eastward, when the speaker accosts him with a sinister "Come in under the shadow of this red rock" and offers to show him not merely horror and desolation but something order and deeper fear. Red rock symbolizes the Christian church. The shadow of the rock is immortal and eternal and it is different from the shadow of man, which is his death. In the morning, solubilizing youth, it is behind and in the evening, symbolizing old age, it stands in the front, ready to face him. Dust is the symbolic reminder to man of his bodily mortality, his beginning and end in matter and "The fear" is partly the fear of death, but still more a nameless, ultimate fear, a horror of the completely negative." (F.R. Leavis). The 'fearful' associations, raised in Eliot's line, are biblical. In this way, the modern Waste Land is linked up with the Biblical Waste Land. Two episodes of guilty love are introduced, which are Eliot's comments on the sexual perversion of the modern waste Landers. Eliot's note refers us to the libretto of Tristan and Soiled, the opera by Richard Wagner (1813-83). A sailor is singing about the sweetheart he has left behind him: 'The wind blows fresh to the homeland. My Irish girl, where are you lingering?' Act I of Wagner's Tristan ends with a scene of mystical love-recognition. Eliot again refers to Wagner's opera, when Tristan is dying, waiting for Soiled his beloved, but the look-out reports that there is no sign of her ship: 'Desolate and empty the sea.' These two extracts from the German Opera enclose within them another episode of guilty love,

and so equally devoid of satisfaction. It presents the picture of a youthful, romantic love. 'The Hyacinth girl', young and beautiful lady, has now been forgotten by her lover, but a year ago when they came back together from the Hyacinth garden, the lover had a moment of intense emotional ecstasy. Hyacinths are the flowers that symbolize the resurrected God of the fertility rites also. In Greek myth, Hyacinth was killed in an accident and a flower grew out of his blood. In this passage, Hyacinth girl speaks with hurt simplicity. Her words are child-like words, self-pitying, spoken perhaps in memory, perhaps by a ghost, perhaps by a wistful woman now out of her mind. The response exposes many contradictory layers of feeling: "..... I knew nothing, Looking into the heart of light, the silence." The context is erotic, the language that of mystical experience—plainly a tainted mysticism. The words "I was neither living nor dead" signify a moment of ecstasy, and "In the heart of light, a silence" echo a similar passage of Dante's *Inferno*, and bring out the fertility of sex outside marriage. In the next passage, a clairvoyant named Madame Sosostri is shown as telling fortune with Tarot packs. Madame Sosostri is a fake fortuneteller in the novel *Come Yellow* (1921) by Aldous Huxley. The Tarot pack of 78 cards, referred to in the passage was used in the ancient Egypt to forecast the rise and fall of the river Nile, the source of life and fertility. But in the Contemporary world the function of the pack has degenerated and it is used for the forbidden fortune telling. This degeneration is symbolized by the fact that Madame Sosostri suffers from bad cold and lives in constant fear of the Police: "One must be so careful these days," she says to the woman who has been consulting her as regards her fortune, and adds that she would bring the horoscope of Mrs. Equitone herself. The various cards in the Tarot pack represent the different personages who are: a) the drowned Phaenician Sailor, a type of fertility God, whose image was thrown into the sea each year to symbolize the death of the summer. Drowning is a process of transformation and so his eyes have been transfigured into pearls. The line, 'Those are pearls, that were his eyes,' is reminiscent of Aerial's song in *The Tempest* b) Belladonna: literally, in Italian, beautiful lady, also the popular name for a flower from which is obtained a dangerous drug, used by women to enlarge the pupil of the eye; also the name for one of the three Fates of classical legends. Belladonna is the lady of situations in the *Waste Land*, for she is adept in manipulating sex intrigues. Her name is reminiscent of a title of painting of Virgin Mary by Leonardo, titled: *Madonna of the rock*. c) The man with three staves is the King Fisher himself, symbol of degenerate humanity, requiring a three-fold remedy to give, to sympathize, and to control. d) The wheel, it symbolizes the efforts of degenerate humanity to control and guide their own destiny, without caring for divine guidance. It may also symbolize the flux of life and the cycle of seasons. e) the one-eyed merchant is the Smyrna merchant who in the past brought both religion and sexuality to Europe. Now he has only one eye, i.e., represents only sexuality and has lost his religious function. f) The Hanged Man stands for the dead fertility God or Christ crucified, but such spiritual values are not found in the modern *Waste Land*. He is 'hooded' and the fortune teller cannot recognize him g) the crowds of people, 'Walking in a ring,' are the London crowds going through their daily round of existence which is dull and boring. The protagonist then surveys 'The Unreal City'. This unreal city is Eliot's London, Baudelaire's Paris and Dante's Limbo. Eliot is presenting a vision of contemporary life but all ages and all centuries are contained in it. This unreal city is given an additional haunting dimension as a realm of death-in-life by being linked with Dante's Limbo, the region of those dead, who, while on earth, had 'lived without praise or blame,' 'who had not been strong enough in will to do either good or evil,' and so were condemned forever to wander aimlessly, in feverish, useless motion. And as this throng moves through the murky streets of wintry London, the poet encounters one with whom he has shared experience and now shares memories of war. Eliot considers all wars to be one war Stetson represents humanity at all-times. The 'corpse' symbolizes Stetson's spiritual failure and 'the Dog' symbolizes spiritual awareness or conscience, which tries to awaken man and this awakening is not linked by Stetson or other *Waste Landers*. This section ends with a line from Baudelaire's prefatory poem 'Au Lecteur' (To the Reader) "O hypocrite reader, my fellow-man, my brother." They share the sin of ennui, boredom heightened to a profound spiritual dissatisfaction, expressed in the modern term anomie.

13.5 A Game of Chess A Game of Chess revolves around perverted nature, denied or murdered offspring. Title is taken from Middleton's play, *Women Beware Women*, in which Bianca, in the background, is being seduced by the duke, while in the foreground Livia, the duke's accomplice, plays a game of chess with Bianca's mother-in-law in order to hold her attention. Every move in the game corresponds to the forcible seduction of Bianca. The effect of the title is to suggest that the relationships of the men and women depicted in this section are akin to a game of chess, with its moves and counter-moves, and attempts of the adversaries to out maneuver each other. It symbolizes perversion of sexual values in the contemporary world of desolation. Sex has become a matter of intrigue and seduction, and so the cause of spiritual death and dissolution. The opening of the section is a mosaic of quotations, phrases and allusions from various authors woven into a pattern. They are a fine example of Eliot's poetic shorthand. The luxurious surrounding of the lady in the beginning of this section, brings out the artificiality of her life. "The chair she sat in," reminds one of *Coleoptera* in her barge, and the connection is reinforced by the mention of carved Dolphins a few lines later. The description of the lady's accumulation of scene in Pope's the 'Rape of the Lock', where Belinda's toilet is described. But the relationship between the sexes here is not the harmless play of the 'Rape of the Lock'. Nor is it the passionate belief of Cleopatra in the integrity of personal love, to which she is willing to sacrifice power and empire. When one of the characters here says, "We shall play a game of chess," this is a euphemistic statement of their intention to turn again to the over-familiar routine of their physical relationship. Over the fireplace is carved the picture of Philomela. Eliot's note refers us to *Metamorphoses* by the Roman poet Ovid (43B.C.-A.D.18). Ovid's version of the Greek myth tells how Philomela was raped by King Tereus of Thrace (the husband of her sister Procne), how he cut out her tongue, and how she was eventually transformed into a nightingale and so escaped his murderous rage. Her song filled the wasted Land with antiquity with melody and it echoes still. But to the dirty ears of modern man it is a meaningless "Jug-Jug". In Elizabethan poetry this was a conventional way of representing bird-song; it was also, in contrast, a crude joking reference to sexual intercourse. The waste landers fail to understand the real significance of Phyllome's story- purification and transformation through suffering. Similarly, other figures carved on the wall seem to them mere decoration, useless relics of the past, without any spiritual significance. They are mere "Withered stumps of time" devoid of all significance. Their journey is once again a purposeless wandering, devoid of meaning, this preludes withdrawal to pleasure. This union of the sexes is not in any degree actuated by a desire for children -The comment of the Cockney woman at the close of the section is relevant to the situation here as well as to her own friend's: You are a proper fool, I said. Well, if Albert won't leave you alone, there it is, I said, What you get-married for if you don't want children ? There are two couples that desire to avoid propagation, to escape parentage. There is a distortion of the sexual relationship and the reason for the distortion is that these are the children of lost parents., Various allusions make this quite clear. The Sylvan scene of line 98 is that of *Paradise Lost*, IV, where Satan is described as a Cormorant sitting on the tree of life, awaiting Adam and Eve. This summons to our minds the idea of original Sin, and the fall of Adam and Eve, so many times re-enacted in the Waste Land. There is the suggestion of the Satan who denied god and so lost his spiritual father. The quotation from *The Tempest*, 'Those are pearls that were his eyes', is from song by Ariel that reminds Ferdinand of his drowned father. The father of the speaker in the Waste Land is similarly lost. At the end of the section Ophelia's words. '

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Good night, ladies, good night, sweet ladies, good night, good night.'

recall that both Ophelia and Hamlet have lost their fathers and from this stems the tragedy that overtakes them. In the dialogue between the man and the woman: "Speak to me. Why do you never speak, speak..... You know nothing ? Do you see nothing ? Do you remember nothing ?" There are allusions to the dialogue between Lear and Cordial at the beginning of the play, *King Lear*, when Cordially too answers 'Nothing', and through this loses her father and begins the tragedy.

Towards the end of the section, a picture of lower strata of society has been painted. Lil, a lower class woman, is being given suggestions about the maintenance of her physical self. Other wise, her husband Albert might turn to other woman for physical satisfaction. Thus, the results of perverted sex are highlighted in both the couples. The technique of 'Compare and Contrast' has been used elaborately in this section. In the apparent likeness of past and present lies the deeper contrast of meaning.

13.6 The Fire Sermon

The title of this section is taken from the famous sermon of Lord Budda in which he preaches against the fires of lust, anger, envy and the other pasions that consume men. Buddha enunciates it thus: The eye, O Bikkhus, is burning : visible things are burning With what fire is it burning ? I declare untoi you that it is burning with the fire of lust The title also reminds one of the Confessions of St. Augustine, wherein the represents lust as a burning cauldron. This section, the most explicit of the five sections, surveys with grave denunciatory candor a world of automatic lust. In the opening, Tiresias surveys the condition of river the Themes in the autumn. He finds 'river's tent' is broken; the immediate, visual image is of shelter provided in summer by the leafy boughs of the trees overhanging the river, a shelter now broken by the loss of the leaves at the close of the year. But the rhetorical ring of the first half line suggests more solemn overtones of meaning : perhaps the loss is of some sacred or mystic quality. In the Old Testament 'tent' can mean tabernacle or holy place, arising from the use of a tent as a portable tabernacle by the wandering tribes of Israekl in the wilderness. In Isaiah, the 'river' ins linked with tent' as an image of the power and security that god offers to his chosen people." The nymphs are departed" both because summer is past, and because the world of Spenser's Prothalamion (when nymphs scattered flowers_on the water) is gone. From the 'brown land', amorists have fled indoors, but the river is not restored to a sixteenth-century purity because the debris of which it is now freed was not a sixteenth-century stewing of petals but discarding of twentieth century impedimenta. The nymphs, who have this year departed, are not the same nymphs who departed in autumns known to Spenser; their friends are "the loitering heirs of city directors" who, unwillingly to assume responsibility for any untoward pregnancies, Departed, have left no addresses. The journey is again one without aim, and one that can yield no hope. The person who fishes'in the dull canal' is Ferdinand Prince of Naples. The ceremony of fishing is connected with fertility ritual. In the Mahayana scriptures Buddha is referred to as the Fisherman who draws fish from the ocean and is so represented in figures and pictures. The allusion here is international, for it is Buddha's Fire Sermon that combines with the reference to Augustine to close the section. Eliot is saying that the fishing is in the wrong hands, as the wheel in section IV is also in the wrong hands. The situation is presented again at the close of the poem where we are told that the question, 'Shall I at least set lands in order?' must be decided. Presumably, that is the affairs of each individual's life must be regulated before salvation can be expected. Spring will return and bring sweeney to Mrs. Porter; Mrs. Porter introduced by the sound of horns and caressed by the moonlight while she laves her feet, is a latter-day Diana bathing; her daughter perhaps, or any of the vanished nymphs, latter-day Philomela 'So rudely forced. Tereu. Reference to "sound of horns and hunting" in day's The Parliament of Bees brings to mind Actaeon, a huntsman in the Greek legend, who surprised Diana (goddess of chastity) bathing with her nymphs. As a punishment he was turned into a stag and hunted to death. The chastity of Diana is contrasted with the promiscuity of Mrs. Porter. Immediately after this, the reference to Mrs. Porter and her daughter who ... Wash their feet in soda water, is associated with the singing of the children, which accompanies the ceremony of feet-washing in the Grail legend. This precedes the restoration of the Fisher King to health. Inevitably, too, it suggests the Christian ceremony of baptism. An echo from the previous section

of the bird song and the account of the Philomela's betrayal rounds off the meaning of the passage. Next, Mr. Eugenides, the Smyrna merchant, is introduced. He is unshaven, unclean, his pockets are full of currants (symbolizing his merchandise) and documents showing that he is authorized to bring his goods carriage and insurance free. The degeneration of his function is further brought out by his inviting Tiresias to hotels, which were the hot beds of corruption and homosexuality during the war, and the years, which followed. And next the typist expects a visitor to her flat. The mating of the typist with the young man, 'Carbuncular' is my mechanical symbolizing animal-like sexual relationship of modern man. The typist passage is the great 'tour de force' of the poem; in gentle lyric melancholy, it's repeatedly disrupted rhythms, the automatism of it's cadencies, in alternate lines as pining and falling nervelessly- The time is now propitious, as the guesses, The meal is ended, she is bored and tired, Endeavors to engage her in caresses which still are unreproved, if undesired-constitute Eliot's most perfect liaison between the self-sustaining gesture of the verse and the presented fact. The upturned eyes and back-nothing else, no torso-recalls a Picasso distortion, the "human engine" throws pathos down into mechanism. The seduction of the typist introduces Tiresias, representative of both sexes, who sees the consummation of the clerk's desires. The eighteenth-century attitude to 'lovely woman's folly, even if only conventional, was better than the indifference with which this couple regards its action. The line, "When lovely Woman stoops to folly", is from the song in Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield in which the lovely woman who has stooped to folly commits suicide. But here the woman, the typist, indifferently turns on the gramophone. Thus the juxtaposition of the past and the present brings out the contrast, and in this way heightens Eliot's satire on the Contemporary perversion of values. Tiresias looks on a scene that typifies all the sexual relationships in the poem, and so what he sees is 'the substance of the poem.' All the more so because the music that he hears repeats one of the leading themes-that of the lost father:

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Sitting upon a bank Weeping again the King my father's wreck, This music crept by me upon the waters,

And the father here, not only the leader of the family, is also the leader of a country, being once again Ferdinand's father, the King. As before, at the conclusion of the glimpse of the Waste Land's mechanical pleasure, it is impressed upon us that what these people lack is guidance from without. The music leads the poem's action to one of the few manifestations of virility in the Waste Land, in lower Thames Street, abode of the fish man, those who continue to give allegiance to the source of life. They live by the river and by the church. This manifestation of virility is transitory, however, and with the song of the three Thames daughters who, like Wagner's Rhine daughters, have been violated, comes the treatment of the river as it appears now, dirty and sordid. That the following lines, switching to the scene on the Thames as Elizabeth travels in magnificent procession, are partially a contrast to the contemporary squalor is indubitable. Fundamentally, Elizabeth is the same as the childless lovers of all the earlier sections. She toys with the idea of marriage and remains childless-Eliot refers to this specifically in his note on the passage. The exact parallel to Elizabeth in the modern scene is the woman in the first part of 'A Game of Chess', also surrounded by luxury. Each of the Thames daughters speaks in turn to recount the circumstances of her seduction. The broken quotations from St. Augustine and the Fire Sermon summarize the lesson of the section- that the sin of the actors is in the sterile burning of their lust. So it has been in all ages. Human beings have at all times been open to, and have succumbed to, the same temptations. The burning of lust, the sterility of love, the physical and spiritual drought, can be quenched only by the coming of the life-giving water, though this may mean, paradoxically, as it does in the fourth section, physical death by water. That is, a death that can lead to renewed spiritual life. 13.7 Suggested Readings 5. The Art of T. S. Eliot by Helen Gardner 6. The Poetry of T. S. Eliot by D. E. S. Maxwell 7. T. S. Eliot, His mind and art by A. G. George 8. T. S. Eliot, A Collection of Critical Essays by Hugh Kenner

Unit 14: The Waste Land (Section Wise Critical Analysis)-II 14.1 Objectives 14.2 Death by Water 14.3 What the Thunder Said 14.4 Symbolism in The Waste Land 14.5 The Use of Poetic Shorthand 14.1 Objectives The objective of this lesson is to acquaint the distance learner with a critical understanding of The Waste Land, discussing the last two parts along with symbolism and poetic technique used in the whole poem by T. S. Eliot. 14.2 Death by Water According to Jessie Weston, each year at Alexandria an effigy of the head of the god was thrown into the sea as a symbol of the death of the powers of nature. The head was carried by the current to Byblos. It was then retrieved and worshipped as a symbol of the god reborn. Another powerful tradition of a life-bringing death-by-water is contained in the Christian sacrament of Baptism. This section is a close

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adaptation of the seven lines of a French poem by Eliot, 'Danle Restaurant', written May-June 1918. The Phoenician sailor, Phlabas was young, tall and handsome, but he was drowned because his life was a sordid round of business activity and pleasure without any spiritual motivation. There is rebirth for the vegetation God drowning but for the Phlabas and the modern man there is no re-birth as they lack spiritual guidance. 14.3 What the Thunder Said Eliot wrote to Bertrand Russell (1923) that he was glad Russell liked the Waste Land, 'and especially Part V, which in my opinion is not the best part, but the only part that justifies the whole, at all.' Eliot notes that in the first part lines 322-94, three themes are employed. First, the story told in Luke XXIV, of the two disciples traveling on the road to Emmaus (a village some distance from Jerusalem) on the day of Christ's resurrection. He joins them but remains unrecognized until he blesses their evening meal. Meanwhile, the disciples talk over the recent events-the trial, the crucifixion and so on. The section begins with the events of Christ's betrayal and arrest, after the night of agonized prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, until the moment of his death. At the death of Chirst the earth shook. However, the poet believes that his crucification was not his real death, for Chirst lived on through his religion in the hearts of his disciples. But the modern man is dying a living- death because of his lack of spirituality and pessimism. The second theme specified by Eliot is

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the approach to Chapel Perilous. This is the final stage of the Grail quest.

Medieval versions of the Grail legend tell of the horrors with which the Chapel Perilous was filled to test the Knight's Courage and of the nightmare visions, including bats with baby faces that assail him on his approach. The knight is tested by the illusion of nothingness. This theme is interwoven with the Emmaus story from lines 331-94. Both these journeys have ended with success despite all kinds of trails and doubts, because they had definite purpose. But the journey of modern humanity is merely aimless wandering, without any purpose or goal. This becomes the third theme, the decay of Eastern Europe in the modern world. The vivid description of uprooted humanity has been taken from Hermann Hesse's The Brink of Chaos. The vast expanse of barrenness can be witnessed. The old values are losing their hold with the falling towers. Civilization itself seems to be coming to an end. Eastern Europe seems to have gone mad. She is represented as woman fiddling music on her own black hair. Humanity has grown godless, and spiritually dead. This is symbolized by 'empty Cisterns' and 'exhausted Wells'. Eliot recommends the wisdom of India for the spiritual salvation of modern humanity. He refers us to the source of the Indian legend of the Thunder in the sacred book Brihadaranyaka- Upanishad. There is famine and drought and three groups-gods, demons, men-approach the creator Parajapati and each in turn asks him to speak. To each group he answers 'DA'. Each group interprets this reply differently. According to the fable, 'This is what the divine voice, the Thunder, repeats when he says DA, DA, DA: "Control Yourself; give alms,; be compassionate." The title of this section has also been derived from this fable.

First 'DA' means 'to give'. Giving over to some noble cause is possible only in moments of great emotional excitement and such step cannot be retraced back by prudential considerations. Martyrs of such noble cause are not remembered in obituaries or in the wills of the rich. But they are the ones who bring spiritual regeneration. Second 'DA' means 'Dayadhvam' i.e. 'to sympathize'. Modern man is imprisoned in his own isolated self. It is only in the night during sleep, when our conscious self is asleep, that we hear for a moment 'ethereal whispers'. Modern man is likened to 'coriolanus,' the proud and self-centered Roman leader, but he can be redeemed through 'Sympathy' and harmony with others. Third, DA means 'Damyata' i.e. 'Self-Control'. Unlike the rider, who may dominate his horse, the sailor survives and moves by co-operation with a nature that cannot be forced; and this directing, sensitive hand, feeling on the sheet the pulsation of the wind and on the rudder the momentary thrust of waves, become the imagined instrument of comparably sensitive human relationship. If dominance compels response, control invites it; and the response comes 'gaily'. In the last passage, the poet strikes a personal note and tells the spiritually dead humanity how he hopes to achieve spiritual and social disintegration in the Waste Land. The poet turns his back on the dead land and sits fishing on the shore of the river i.e. he makes efforts at his spiritual re-generation. He remembers some lines from Dante's Purgatoria and some from another Latin poem, Pervigilium Veneris, which teach him that suffering results in self-purification and beauty is born when the heart is purified. He has also learnt that absolute detachment is necessary for spiritual salvation. These are the principles he 'collected' and he hopes to save himself by following them in life. Just as the mad Heironymo in Kyd's Spanish Tragedy is ready to fit the actors with a suitable play. So Eliot has also fitted or provided humanity with the necessary advice and guidance. In the end, he reminds humanity of the teachings of the Upanishads. It is in this way alone that absolute peace - 'the peace which passes understanding' - can be achieved.

14.4 Symbolism in The Waste Land

Symbolism is essentially an oblique or indirect mood of expression, which suggests much more than is actually described or asserted. It deals with the Infinite and the Absolute and expresses the spiritual and the abstract through the physical and the concrete. Symbolism as a conscious movement originated in France as a reaction against naturalism and the precision and exactitude of the 'naturalist' school represented by Zola. The French symbolists like Laforgue and others headed by Mallarmé, condemned more 'exteriority' and laid great emphasis on the treatment of the sensations, or the representation of eye. There are two kind of symbols (1) Traditional and (2) Personal. Traditional symbols are stock symbols; their use increases the evocative pleasure of poetry without introducing any element of complexity or obscurity. Personal symbols are devised to express the vague fleeting impressions passing through mind, or to convey a sense of mystery in life. Eliot was greatly influenced by French symbolists. He uses symbolic technique to express, not personal sensations, but a complex and decadent civilization with all its soul killing monotony and meaningless routine. Eliot's symbols are predominantly traditional, drawn from the literatures and mythologies of the past. In The Waste Land 'dry bones' signify spiritual decay and desolation, and 'rats' the ugliness and horror of modern civilization. In the same way, 'dry grass', 'rocks' 'winds singing dryly' are all symbols of spiritual sterility, from which results the desolation of the Contemporary Waste Land as well as the Waste Lands of the past. 'Spring' stands for re-birth, 'winter' for death, 'rain' for spiritual fertility, and 'draught' for spiritual dryness. Fishing symbolizes spiritual re-birth and rejuvenation by using traditional symbols,

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Eliot retains the essential suggestive quality of all symbolism, while limiting the suggestiveness to a clearly defined range

in this way, he intensifies the feeling, the content of the poem, retains the suggestiveness which distinguishes poetry from prose, and yet assures that the suggestiveness will be confined to the demands of the poem's purpose. In this way, he eliminates the blurring of the object, or excessive vagueness, and achieves what matchlessness calls, "precision in vagueness". Some symbols are used ambivalently. 'Water' is a symbol of regeneration, of purification of life as well as of death. In 'The Fire Sermon', fire stands for the destroyer, for the sterile lusts of the city; it is in the closing lines of the final section that fire represents the purifier, the purgatorial flame. The subtly different connotations of the chief symbols within the Course of 'The Waste Land' itself are one of the strongest means by which the poet conveys the complexity of the existence that confronts him. There are some examples of personal symbols in the Waste Land

e.g. 'The Dog' symbolizes human conscience, the 'Red and ego which isolate the human soul and lead to its fall. Urban imagery Rock', the Wrath of God or a place of refuge, and 'Broken Coriolanus', the pride and the symbols of city life are also used frequently i.e. a 'taxi' throbbing waiting' symbolizes the eagerness of the typist to return home, 'Silk hat on the head of a Badford Millionaire' sybolizes the awkwardness of the young man Carbuncular, the 'broken finger nails' symbolize the emptiness and insignificance of the life of the three Thames Daughters. The rivers, "sweating oil and tar," stands for the squalor and dirt of modern life. "A heap of broken images", "Withered stumps of time" signify loss of faith in old values. Philomel and her song are symbols of spiritual rejuvenation through suffering, her song being mere "jug-jug" to modern humanity symbolizes the indifference of modern humanity of spirituality and purification. Tiresias himself is a complex symbol, a symbol of human conscience, and the spokesman of humanity. Biblical symbols have also been used in abundance. "The cricket which gives no relief", the address, "Son of man", "the fear in a handful of dust", "the rock", "the dead tree", "the dry bones" are all derived from Bible. 14.5 The Use of Poetic Shorthand In the Waste Land alone there are allusions and references to at least twenty-five different writers, and there are passages from at least six different languages. The close of "The burial of the Dead" is a mosaic of quotations and allusions that I-A. Richards referred to his style as, "Poetic Shorthand". This device links the Contemporary waste Land with places and scenes in history, myth and legend, by the use of phrases, fragments of quotations, allusions etc., from poets and authors of different ages and countries. His use of the phrase 'unreal city', in the following passage, links up London with Paris, the city of Baudelaire, and with Dante's Limbo. Unreal city Under the brown fog of a winter dawn,

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A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many I had not thought death undone so many.

In this way topical is universalized and the poem acquires the impersonality of great art. By relating the past to Contemporary life, the poet not only charges his poetry with an added significance, but also emphasizes the Continued virility of the past. The past is glorified and the sordidness and squalor of the present is accentuated by contrast. Eliot merely suggests "the sameness at the heart of Contrast", "resembling Contrasts" -that the human life has basically been the same despite superficial differences. For example, though in a famous passage in "The Fire Sermon" the mention of, "Elizabeth and Leicester brings an illusion of glamour, close thought reveals that the stale pretence of their relationship left it essentially as empty as that between the typist and the clerk" -(Matthiessen). But the poet does not say so explicitly: he juxtaposes the past and the present. The contrast is obvious, but the sameness is implicit. The technical device of mythical method and use of abundant allusions and quotations in poetic shorthand is for compression. According to I. A. Richards "The Waste Land is the equivalent in content to an epic. Without this device twelve books would have been needed." Often a sense of ironic contrast is also produced by the device of 'Poetic Shorthand'. The quotation 'When lovely woman stoops to folly' signifies the value attached to chastity in the past and its ironically contrasted with the typist's indifference to it. The 'Sound of Horns' makes reference to the legend of Diana and Actaeon but at the same time purity of Diana is ironically contrasted with Mrs. Porter's Washing her feet,'in soda water', to improve her complexion. Eliot has compressed into a single moment this memory and the sameness of other moments; He has enclosed 'vast immensities' within little space. In order to concentrate within his poem varied range and volume of awareness, Eliot eliminated all connectives, everything that was not entirely essential, and in his way increased the energy and lyric intensity of the poem. He thus created a work of art, a triumph of intellectual organization and conscious effort. 14.6 Suggested Readings 1. The Art of T. S. Eliot by Helen Gardner 2. The Poetry of T. S. Eliot by D. E. S. Maxwell 3. T. S. Eliot, His mind and art by A. G. George 4. T. S. Eliot, A Collection of Critical Essays by Hugh Kenner

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1/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	17 WORDS	65%	MATCHING TEXT	17 WORDS
<p>in T. S. Eliot's Poetry 5.6.2 Obscurity in T. S. Eliot's Poetry 5.6.3 T. S. Eliot</p> <p>SA 197208EP054.docx (D128526625)</p>					
2/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	16 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	16 WORDS
<p>The Burial of the Dead 13.5 A Game of Chess 13.6 The Fire</p> <p>SA 5 ENM409 Anum fatima Assistant Prof Distance Education AMU.docx (D142996024)</p>					
3/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	28 WORDS	44%	MATCHING TEXT	28 WORDS
<p>modernism was viewed as "a rejection of traditional 19th- century norms, whereby artists, architects, poets and thinkers either altered or abandoned earlier conventions in an attempt to re-envision</p> <p>SA Patel Ravindra.pdf (D131877983)</p>					
4/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	42 WORDS	76%	MATCHING TEXT	42 WORDS
<p>Two of the most prominent poems where Eliot shows his modern orientations are "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and "The Waste Land." "The LoveSong of J. Alfred Prufrock " is regarded as one of the basic modernist poems.</p> <p>SA Mahesh Z. Kikani T. S. Eliot _Twentieth Century British Poetry .docx (D113323270)</p>					
5/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	32 WORDS	36%	MATCHING TEXT	32 WORDS
<p>the poem can be understood to be either as a real place or a mental state reflecting the subconscious of the person. The most important modernist technique in the</p> <p>SA Mahesh Z. Kikani T. S. Eliot _Twentieth Century British Poetry .docx (D113323270)</p>					

6/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	57 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	57 WORDS
<p>The poem shows many fragmented images that reflect the feeling of loss in modern man. Although the reader understands nothing of these images, the narrator promises to show the reader how to make meaning from fragmentation. This construction of meaning from fragmentation is one of the essential features of modernism. The poem</p> <p>SA Mahesh Z. Kikani T. S. Eliot _Twentieth Century British Poetry .docx (D113323270)</p>				
7/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	13 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	13 WORDS
<p>the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history." The</p> <p>W https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/t-s-eliot</p>				
8/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	12 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	12 WORDS
<p>an Anglo – Catholic in religion’ and ‘a royalist in politics’.</p> <p>W https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/classicism-in-t-s-eliot-poetry.html</p>				
9/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	12 WORDS	95% MATCHING TEXT	12 WORDS
<p>published as The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism</p> <p>W https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/t-s-eliot</p>				
10/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	13 WORDS	76% MATCHING TEXT	13 WORDS
<p>of T.S. Eliot T. S. Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri</p> <p>SA Patel Ravindra.pdf (D131877983)</p>				
11/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
<p>Knowledge and Experience in the Philosophy of F. H. Bradley • 1965</p> <p>SA Patel Ravindra.pdf (D131877983)</p>				

12/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	23 WORDS	50% MATCHING TEXT	23 WORDS
<p>T. S. Eliot's Work T. S. Eliot's literary production spreads over 45 years. He wrote poems, plays, literary and social essays</p> <p>SA VIMALA CHAP 1.doc (D41369072)</p>				
13/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	127 WORDS	60% MATCHING TEXT	127 WORDS
<p>The Love-Song of J. Alfred Prufrock 2. Portrait of a Lady 3. The Preludes 4. Rhapsody on a Windy Night 5. The "Boston Evening Transcript" 6. Mr. Apollinax iii. The Third Period: (1918-1925). The most important poems of this period are as follows: 1. Gerontion 2. Burbank with a Baedekar 3. Sweeney Erect 4. A Cooking Egg 5. Sweeney among the Nightingales 6. The Waste Land, (1922) 7. The Hollow Men, (1925) iv. The Fourth Period: (1925-1935). It is called the period of Eliot's Christian Poetry. The following are the significant poems of this Christian period: 1. Ash Wednesday, 1930 2. Journey of the Magi 3. Animalia 4. Marina 5. Choruses from "The Rock" 6. Coriolan 7. A number of minor and unfinished poems</p> <p>SA VIMALA CHAP 1.doc (D41369072)</p>				
14/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	26 WORDS	80% MATCHING TEXT	26 WORDS
<p>the period of Four Quartets which were published as follows: 1. Burnt Norton, 1936 2. East Coker, 1940 3. The Dry Salvages, 1941 4. Little</p> <p>SA VIMALA CHAP 1.doc (D41369072)</p>				
15/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	35 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	35 WORDS
<p>The Rock, a Pageant Play, 1934 2. Murder in the Cathedral, 1935 3. The Family Reunion, 1939 4. The Cocktail Party, 1950 5. The Confidential Clerk, 1954 6. The Elder Statesman, 1959 2.5.3</p> <p>SA Patel Ravindra.pdf (D131877983)</p>				
16/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	78% MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
<p>Prose Eliot's prose was published in the form of articles and essays in</p> <p>SA VIMALA CHAP 1.doc (D41369072)</p>				

17/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	73 WORDS	91% MATCHING TEXT	73 WORDS
<p>The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism, 1933 2. The idea of the Christian Society, 1939 3. Notes towards a Definition of Culture, 1948 4. Selected Essays, Third Edition, 1951 5. On Poetry and Poets, 1957 6. To Criticize the Critic, 1965 7. Tradition and Individual Talent 8. Poetry and Drama 9. The Function of Criticism 10. The English Metaphysical Poets 11. The Frontiers of Criticism, etc</p> <p>SA VIMALA CHAP 1.doc (D41369072)</p>				
18/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	16 WORDS	76% MATCHING TEXT	16 WORDS
<p>T.S.Eliot Thomas Streans Eliot was born on 26 September 1888 in St Louis, Missouri. His</p> <p>SA VIMALA CHAP 1.doc (D41369072)</p>				
19/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	32 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	32 WORDS
<p>the primary channel of transmission of culture is the family: no man wholly escapes from the kind, or wholly surpasses the degree, of culture which he acquired from his early environment'.</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>				
20/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	42 WORDS	95% MATCHING TEXT	42 WORDS
<p>the standard of conduct was that which my grandfather had set; our moral judgments, our decisions between duty and self-indulgence, were taken as if, like Moses he had brought down the tables of law, any deviation from which would be sinful'.</p> <p>SA T S Eliots theory of impersonality A study of his ... etc.pdf (D35738531)</p>				
21/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	17 WORDS	93% MATCHING TEXT	17 WORDS
<div> <div> <p>it is evident that St Louis affected me more deeply than any other environment has done'.</p> <p>W https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T._S._Eliot</p> </div> <div> <p>It is self-that St. Louis affected me more deeply than any other environment has ever done.</p> </div> </div>				

22/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	21 WORDS	97% MATCHING TEXT	21 WORDS
	there is something in having passed one's childhood beside the big river, which is incommunicable to those who have not'.		there is something in having passed one's childhood beside the big river, which is incommunicable to those people who have not.	
	W https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T._S._Eliot			
23/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	80% MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
	the possibility of the juxtaposition of the matter of fact and the fantastic'.			
	SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)			
24/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	71 WORDS	97% MATCHING TEXT	71 WORDS
	Like many modernist writers, Eliot wanted his poetry to express the fragile psychological state of humanity in the twentieth century. The passing of Victorian ideals and the trauma of World War I challenged cultural notions of masculine identity, causing artists to question the romantic literary ideal of a visionary-poet capable of changing the world through verse. Modernist writers wanted to capture their transformed world, which they perceived as fractured, alienated,		Like many modernist writers, Eliot wanted his poetry to express the fragile psychological state of humanity in the twentieth century. The passing away of Romantic and Victorian ideals, and the trauma of World War I challenged cultural notions of masculine identity, causing artists to question the romantic literary ideal of a visionary-poet capable of changing the world through verse. Modernist writers wanted to capture their transformed world, which they perceived as fractured and alienated.	
	W https://www.literaturewise.in/mdl/mod/page/view.php?id=13			
25/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	91 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	91 WORDS
	Eliot saw society as paralyzed and wounded, and he imagined that culture was crumbling and dissolving. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917) demonstrates this sense of indecisive paralysis as the titular Speaker wonders whether he should eat a piece of fruit, make a radical change, or if he has the fortitude to keep living. Humanity's collectively damaged psyche prevented people from communicating with one another, an idea that Eliot explored in many works, including "A Game of Chess" (the second part of The Waste Land) and "The Hollow		Eliot saw society as paralyzed and wounded, and he imagined that culture was crumbling and dissolving. "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917) demonstrates this sense of indecisive paralysis as the titular speaker wonders whether he should eat a piece of fruit, make a radical change, or if he has the fortitude to keep living. Humanity's collectively damaged psyche prevented people from communicating with one another, an idea that Eliot explored in many works, including "A Game of Chess" (the second part of The Waste Land) and "The Hollow	
	W https://www.literaturewise.in/mdl/mod/page/view.php?id=13			

26/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	47 WORDS	93% MATCHING TEXT	47 WORDS
Auditory imagination implies "the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious level of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back seeking the beginning and the end."		auditory imagination is the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word, sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, returning to the origin and bringing something back, seeking the beginning and the end.		
W https://elibrary.tucl.edu.np/bitstream/123456789/458/2/Chapter.pdf				
27/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	20 WORDS	88% MATCHING TEXT	20 WORDS
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief, And dry tones no sound of water."		And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief, And the dry stone no sound of water. (32 – 35)		
W https://elibrary.tucl.edu.np/bitstream/123456789/458/2/Chapter.pdf				
28/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	19 WORDS	66% MATCHING TEXT	19 WORDS
historical sense which perceives not only the pastness of the past, but also its presence. It 'compels a				
SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)				
29/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	34 WORDS	95% MATCHING TEXT	34 WORDS
a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order'.				
SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)				
30/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	19 WORDS	91% MATCHING TEXT	19 WORDS
the past may be altered by the present 'as much as the present is directed by the past'.				
SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)				
31/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	19 WORDS	88% MATCHING TEXT	19 WORDS
The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock', 'Portrait of a Lady', 'Preludes' and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night'		The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", "Portrait of a Lady", "Che Piange", "and "Rhapsody on a Windy Night"		
W https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T._S._Eliot				

32/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	36 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	36 WORDS
<p>What happens is a continual surrender of himself as he is at the moment to something which is more valuable. The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality'.</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>					
33/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	21 WORDS	86%	MATCHING TEXT	21 WORDS
<p>Sighs, short and infrequent, were exhaled, And each man fixed his eyes before his feet' (The Waste Land). This is</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>					
34/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	49 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	49 WORDS
<p>were we led all that way for Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly, We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death, But had thought they were different; this Birth was Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>					
35/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	15 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	15 WORDS
<p>the demon of doubt which is inseparable from the spirit of belief'.</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>					
36/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
<p>Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion,'</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>					
37/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	44 WORDS	92%	MATCHING TEXT	44 WORDS
<p>inexplicable by any non-religious theory: among religions he finds Christianity, and Catholic Christianity, to account most satisfactorily for the world and especially for the moral world within; and thus ... he finds himself inexorably committed to the dogma of the Incarnation. '</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>					

38/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	27 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	27 WORDS
<p>am moved by fancies that are curled Around these images, and cling: The notion of some infinitely gentle Infinitely suffering thing.</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>					
39/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	28 WORDS	93%	MATCHING TEXT	28 WORDS
<p>the love of man and woman . . . is only explained and made reasonable by the higher love, or else is simply the coupling of animals' (</p> <p>SA T S Eliots theory of impersonality A study of his ... etc.pdf (D35738531)</p>					
40/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	22 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	22 WORDS
<p>There will be time, there will be time To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>					
41/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	76 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	76 WORDS
<p>Then came, at a predetermined moment, a moment in time and of time, A moment not out of time, but in time, in what we call history: transecting, bisecting the world of time, a moment in time but not like a moment of time, A moment in time but time was made through that moment: for without the meaning there is no time, and that moment of time gave the meaning. (</p> <p>SA Sampoorna_English.doc (D116685833)</p>					
42/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	11 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	11 WORDS
<p>stillness, 'as a Chinese jar still/Moves perpetually in its stillness'.</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>					
43/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	17 WORDS	65%	MATCHING TEXT	17 WORDS
<p>in T. S. Eliot's Poetry 5.6.2 Obscurity in T. S. Eliot's Poetry 5.6.3 T. S. Eliot</p> <p>SA 197208EP054.docx (D128526625)</p>					

44/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	16 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	16 WORDS
	of J. Alfred Prufrock', 'Portrait of a Lady', 'Preludes', 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' - W https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T._S._Eliot		of J. Alfred Prufrock • Portrait of a Lady • Preludes • Rhapsody on a Windy Night •	
45/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	19 WORDS	65% MATCHING TEXT	19 WORDS
	in T. S. Eliot's Poetry - Obscurity in T. S. Eliot's Poetry - T. S. Eliot SA 197208EP054.docx (D128526625)			
46/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	12 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	12 WORDS
	Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels/And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells'. SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)			
47/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	17 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	17 WORDS
	lines 'I should have been a pair of ragged clawS/Scuttling across the floors of silent seas' W https://taughtalessen.wordpress.com/2020/07/03/t-s-eliot-a-discussion-of-mental-illness/		lines 73-74): "I should have been a pair of ragged claws Scuttling across the floors of silent seas."	
48/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	16 WORDS	70% MATCHING TEXT	16 WORDS
	poems. 'The Love Song', 'Portrait of a Lady', 'Preludes' and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' W https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T._S._Eliot		poems like "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", "Portrait of a Lady", "La Figlia Che Piange", "Preludes", and "Rhapsody on a Windy Night"	
49/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	13 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	13 WORDS
	Time present and time past! Are both perhaps present in time future') SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)			
50/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	27 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	27 WORDS
	Because I do not hope to turn again Because I do not hope Because I do not hope to turn . . . SA ENDY THESIS CHAPTER 2.docx (D21764471)			

51/103**SUBMITTED TEXT**

13 WORDS

76%**MATCHING TEXT**

13 WORDS

classicist in literature, an Anglo-Catholic in religion and a Royalist in politics.

SA Chorus IA.pdf (D161182387)

S. Eliot. Subjugation of Romantic 'Inner Voice' (Subjectivity): Eliot emphasized that the classical school of poetry achieved elegance and dignity. The romantic believes in the poet's own 'inner voice.' Thus he degenerates into chaos and license. He indulges in trivialities. Eliot has pointed out the difference between the romantic school and the classical school. While the classical poetry is complete, mature, orderly, the romantic poetry is fragmentary, immature, and chaotic. This indicates that Eliot has accepted the formula of completeness and formal perfection of classical poetry. Eliot's kinship with Augustan classicism: There is a deep similarity between Eliot's poetry and Augustan poetry. Eliot has stressed the importance of order and discipline of authority and tradition, and of organization and pattern of the Augustan poets. He has emphasized on the organized labor of intellect rather than on the romantic inspiration and institution. Maxwell remarks: "In this Intellectual bias, in the belief that authority rather than liberty is the guide to truth, and in his regard for formal details, is Eliot's kinship with Augustan classicism." Further this critic has pointed out: "Each accepts an existing poetic framework, the rules of an objective authority and makes a conscious effort to work within that framework. Satirical wit plays an important part in both, and with it goes a concern for the necessity of cultivating precision of form and word. This requires an intellectual rather than an emotional, instinctive approach to the task of selecting words, of relating them to each other and to the whole. Yet each of these similarities also involves a difference. The system to which Eliot relates his poetry has a greater scope than Augustan classical authority and becomes a more vital part of the poetry which depends on it. By its relationship with Eliot's poetry the traditional system acquires new significance and becomes a living part of the poetic experiences transcribed in the poetry." Eliot's aspiration for classical preciseness for his symbols and imagery: The romantics make use of symbols as centers of unlimited expansion, with the result there is vagueness and indefiniteness in their poetry. Eliot's images are clear-cut, concrete and precise. He draws his symbols from traditional sources. He does not alter their original significance. According to Maxwell, T. S. Eliot maintains the essential suggestive quality of all symbolism, while limiting the suggestiveness to a clearly defined range. Eliot's approach to symbol and imagery is classical. He retains the suggestiveness which differentiates poetry from prose. His poetry reveals

s poetry Subjugation of Romantic 'Inner Voice' (Subjectivity) : Eliot emphasised that the classical school of poetry achieved an elegance and a dignity. The romantic believes in the poet's own 'inner voice.' Thus he degenerates into chaos and license. He indulges in trivialities. Eliot has pointed out the difference between the romantic school and the classical school. While the classical poetry is complete, mature, orderly, the romantic poetry is fragmentary, immature, and chaotic. This indicates that Eliot has accepted the formula of completeness and formal perfection of the classical poetry. Eliot's kinship with Augustan classicism : There is a deep similarity between Eliot's poetry and the Augustan poetry. Eliot has stressed the importance of order and discipline of authority and tradition, and of organization and pattern of the Augustan poets. He has emphasised on the organised labour of intellect rather than on the romantic inspiration and institution. Maxwell remarks: "In this Intellectual bias, in the belief that authority rather than liberty is the guide to truth, and in his regard for formal details, is Eliot's kinship with Augustan classicism." Further this critic has pointed out: "Each accepts an existing poetic framework, the rules of an objective authority and makes a conscious effort to work within that framework. Satirical wit plays an important part in both, and with it goes a concern for the necessity of cultivating precision of form and word. This requires an intellectual rather than an emotional, instinctive approach to the task of selecting words, of relating them to each other and to the whole. Yet each of these similarities involves also a difference. The system to which Eliot relates his poetry has a greater scope than Augustan classical authority and becomes a more vital part of the poetry which depends on it. By its relationship with Eliot's poetry the traditional system acquires new significance and becomes a living part of the poetic experiences transcribed in the poetry." Eliot's aspiration for classical preciseness for his symbols and imagery : The romantics make use of symbols as centers of unlimited expansion, with the result there is vagueness and indefiniteness in their poetry. Eliot's images are clear-cut, concrete and precise. He draws his symbols from traditional sources. He does not alter their original significance. According to Maxwell, T. S. Eliot maintains the essential suggestive quality of all symbolism, while limiting the suggestiveness to a clearly defined range. Eliot's approach to symbol and imagery is classical. He retains the suggestiveness which differentiates poetry from prose. His poetry reveals

W <https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/classicism-in-t-s-eliot's-poetry.html>

53/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	31 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	31 WORDS
economy of classical school; he has the epigrammatic preciseness, compactness and terseness. In this manner he achieves suggestiveness and elaboration by the help of his symbols and images which have		economy of classical school; he has the epigrammatic preciseness, compactness and terseness. In this manner he achieves suggestiveness and elaboration by the help of his symbols and images which have		
W https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/classicism-in-t-s-eliot-poetry.html				

54/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	368 WORDS	96% MATCHING TEXT	368 WORDS
background of literary tradition. Eliot's concept of literary tradition: Eliot has stressed the importance of literary tradition. This literary tradition indicates the accumulated wisdom and experience of the ages. Let us take his critical essay Tradition and Individual Talent. In this essay he surveys European literature from Homer down to his own day as a single whole. According to him, English literature must be scrutinized as a part of this literary tradition. Maxwell is of the opinion that a significant feature of classicism is "its acceptance of an already existing background whose function is to provide the poem's incidental symbolism." Pope draws his symbols from the world of classical mythology in his epic The Rape of the Lock. Similarly, Eliot draws his symbols from the traditional literature of Europe. In The Waste Land he blends the traditional European and eastern thought which renders a great purpose in his interpretation of the contemporary problem. The fertility myths, vegetation ceremonies and the Grail legend are all used by him in the same manner as Pope classical mythology in order to express his idea. In the section, The Burial of the Dead, he uses the literary tradition in order to elucidate the present against the background of tradition. The other term "the objective correlative" is used in order to indicate the significance of the literary tradition in Eliot's poetry. Eliot's wit has an affinity with the classics. Pope was witty because he wanted to entertain but Eliot's object is different. He uses wit as an instrument for commenting on modern life and its problems. It is not an end in itself. On the other hand, it is hand-made for the serious purpose of his poetry. So, Eliot's life bears a resemblance with that of the Augustans because the latter were moralists whose aim was to satirize human frailties in their civilization. As with the classical poets, Eliot's wit has brevity, careful phrasing and clarity of thought and expression. Wit is one of the chief characteristics of classical poetry which has been used by T.S. Eliot very successfully made us understand the human frailties of the 20th century. 5.6.2 Obscurity in T. S. Eliot'		background of literary tradition. Eliot's concept of literary tradition : Eliot has stressed the importance of literary tradition. This literary tradition indicates the accumulated wisdom and experience of the ages. Let us take his critical essay Tradition and Individual Talent. In this essay he surveys European literature from Homer down to his own day as a single whole. According to him English literature must be scrutinised as a part of this literary tradition. Maxwell is of the opinion that a significant feature of classicism is "its acceptance of an already existing background whose function is to provide the poem's incidental symbolism." Pope draws his symbols from the world of classical mythology in his epic The Rape of the Lock. Similarly, Eliot draws his symbols from the traditional literature of Europe. In The Waste Land he blends the traditional European and eastern thought which renders a great purpose in his interpretation of the contemporary problem. The fertility myths, vegetation ceremonies and the Grail legend are all used by him in the same manner as Pope classical mythology in order to express his idea. In the section, The Burial of the Dead, he uses the literary tradition in order to elucidate the present against the background of tradition. The other term "the objective co-relative" is used in order to indicate the significance of the literary tradition in Eliot's poetry. Eliot's wit has an affinity with the classics Pope was witty because he wanted to entertain but Eliot's object is different. He uses wit as an instrument for commenting on modern life and its problems. It is not an end in itself. On the other hand, it is a hand-made of the serious purpose of his poetry. So, Eliot's life bears a resemblance with that of the Augustans because the latter were moralists whose aim was to satirise human frailties in their civilization. As with the classical poets, Eliot's wit has brevity, careful phrasing and clarity of thought and expression. Wit is one of the chief characteristics of classical poetry which has been used by T.S. Eliot very successfully to make us understand the human frailties of the 20th century. Tags: Poetry T.S Eliot • •		
W https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/classicism-in-t-s-eliot-poetry.html				

55/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	30 WORDS	98% MATCHING TEXT	30 WORDS
<p>Tradition and Individual Talent: "Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality."</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>				

56/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	62 WORDS	97% MATCHING TEXT	62 WORDS
<div> <p>S. Eliot as a Dramatist Eliot's fame as a dramatist rests on five plays : (1) Murder in the Cathedral (2) The Family Reunion (3) The Cocktail Party (4) Confidential Clerk (5) The Elder Statesman T. S. Eliot aimed at reviving poetic drama by writing these plays. His writing considerably influenced the course of modern English drama.</p> <p>W https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/04/t-s-eliot-as-dramatist-achievements.html</p> </div> <div> <p>S. Eliot as a Dramatist : achievements • • • • Also Read Eliot's fame as a dramatist rests on five plays : Murder in the Cathedral (2) The Family Reunion (3) The Cocktail Party (4) Confidential Clerk (5) The Elder Statesman T. S. Eliot aimed at reviving poetic drama by writing these plays. His writing considerably influenced the course of modern English drama.</p> </div>				

Significance of Eliot plays Eliot's plays must be examined against the light of his intention which was to bring poetic drama back to the modern age. Conscious of his weaknesses, he constantly strove to overcome them in successive plays. He faithfully kept up the exploration and experimentation that he said was necessary in achieving greater approximation to the unattainable ideal" of poetic drama. The plays are the practical applications of his theory of poetic drama and in each, one can observe his technical skill as a poet. They are, in a way, a continuation of his poetry; his attempts to carry to a larger and wider audience the themes of his poetry. Development of Eliot Dramatic Genius Eliot was capable of viewing his last piece of work with critical detachment and taking up the next work with the intention of avoiding the mistakes he had made in the earlier one. There is a clear evolution in his work from *Murder in the Cathedral* to *The Elder Statesmen*. Technically each play is an improvement on the former. The subject of *Murder in the Cathedral* was from the early history of England. Problems of versification and language were solved by the choice of a neutral style. But the solution was special to this play because verse was easily acceptable in a play whose subject was historical. If poetic drama were to stand on its own against prose drama, he realized that the subjects chosen should be from contemporary life, and that there should be a flexibility in the verse. The four plays that followed had contemporary settings and were more or less in verse throughout. *The Family Reunion* suffered from a lengthy exposition; "a chorus of obtuse aunts and uncles, an odd appearance of the furies and an ambiguous kind of ending in that one is not clear whether to consider the play as the tragedy of the mother, or the salvation of the son." He avoids drawbacks in *The Cocktail Party*, where exposition is short and there is no use of the supernatural or the chorus. Each of his plays mark a definite step forward, overcoming earlier errors, and showing "a miraculous development in craftsmanship". Diction and Versification Aware that the earlier attempts of authors at poetic drama had failed because of their lifeless imitations of Elizabethan blank verse, Eliot turned to an earlier model that of *Everyman*. But his aim was to forge a new form suitable for his plays. He managed to develop a flexible verse form from contemporary idioms which would serve all his purposes. Weakness in Characterization: He achieved remarkable success in his language and versification. But he has not done equally well in his characterisation. His characters are seldom individualized. Usually, they are sophisticated or aristocratic by birth or association. Their insights are often of a remote and unfamiliar kind, too profound and complex to allow for an easy appreciation of the plays. Eliot's characters lack reality and are "agents manipulated to make real some spiritual experience". Plot: All his plays

Significance of Eliot plays:- Eliot's plays must be examined against the light of his intention which was to bring poetic drama back to the modern age. Conscious of his weaknesses, he constantly strove to overcome them in successive plays. He faithfully kept up the exploration and experimentation that he said was necessary in achieving greater approximation to the unattainable ideal" of poetic drama. The plays are the practical applications of his theory of poetic drama and in each, one can observe his technical skill as a poet. They are in a way, a continuation of his poetry; his attempts to carry to a larger and wider audience, the themes of his poetry. Development of Eliot Dramatic Genius:- Eliot was capable of viewing his last piece of work with critical detachment and take up the next work with the intention of avoiding the mistakes he had made in the earlier one. There is a clear evolution in his work from *Murder in the Cathedral* to *The Elder Statesmen*. Technically each play is an improvement on the former. The subject of *Murder in the Cathedral* was from the early history of England. Problems of versification and language were solved by the choice of a neutral style. But the solution was special to this play because verse was easily acceptable in a play whose subject was historical. If poetic drama were to stand on its own against prose drama, he realised that the subjects chosen should be from contemporary life, and that there should be a flexibility in the verse. The four plays that followed had contemporary settings and were more or less in verse throughout. *The Family Reunion* suffered from a lengthy exposition; "a chorus of obtuse aunts and uncles, an odd appearance of the furies and an ambiguous kind of ending in that one is not clear whether to consider the play as the tragedy of the mother, or the salvation of the son." He avoids drawbacks in *The Cocktail Party*, where exposition is short and there is no use of the supernatural or the chorus. Each of his plays mark a definite step forward, overcoming earlier errors, and showing "a miraculous development in craftsmanship". Diction and Versification:- Aware that the earlier attempts of authors at poetic drama had failed because of their lifeless imitations of Elizabethan blank verse, Eliot turned to an earlier model that of *Everyman*. But his aim was to forge a new form suitable for his plays. He managed to develop a flexible verse form from contemporary idiom which would serve all his purposes. Weakness in Characterization:- He achieved remarkable success in his language and versification. But he has not done equally well in his characterisation. His characters are seldom, individualised. Usually, they are sophisticated or aristocratic by birth or association. Their insights are often of a remote and unfamiliar kind, too profound and complex to allow for an easy appreciation of the plays. Eliot's characters lack reality and are "agents manipulated to make real some spiritual experience". Plot:- All his

have in common a preoccupation with the nature of sainthood and the ability of a saint's death to benefit the life of others. This is, of course, most obvious in *Murder in the Cathedral*. All the plays have a kind of double pattern. On one level, they entertain; on the other hand they provoke thought on a higher plane. Eliot's plays embody his tragic sense of life which comes from the awareness of the mystery and inevitability of suffering. The human condition implies suffering. In his plays there are characters who exist on different levels of consciousness. The choice they make in a certain situation reveals their character and the level of consciousness they have achieved. Thomas in *Murder in the Cathedral* is at the top of the scale in spiritual awareness and he chooses martyrdom. The element of tragedy in all his plays comes from the awareness that Man is imperfect, and that he suffers owing to the original sin. Traditional dramatic categories cannot be applied to Eliot's plays. They cannot be termed either as tragedies or as comedies. A.G. George calls them "existential plays". Drawbacks: The fault most often found in his play is that his characters are not individuals and thus lack reality. The thought expressed is too often subtle and complex for easy understanding. The dialogues sound too unnatural and artificial. Another criticism is against the inclusion of artificial supernatural elements such as the Furies and the spiritual guardians Julia and Alec. The sudden switch from a light sense of social comedy to serious and intense philosophical dialogue is somewhat disconcerting. These are the various criticisms made against Eliot's plays. The experience presented in the play is also said to be too remote from ordinary life, to make effective drama. Eliot's achievement and greatness cannot be diminished in the light of the criticism leveled against him. The work he has done in versification alone entitles him to fame. At his highest moments he achieves that fusion of drama and poetry which he advocated. The speech of the Chorus in *Murder in the Cathedral* is one clear example of such a fusion. Technically, Eliot achieved a great deal with his power of phrasing and the careful use of words. His plays are, undoubtedly, great literature and as such are assured of a permanent place in dramatic literature. 5.6.4 T. S. Eliot'

plays have in common a pre-with the nature of sainthood and the ability of a saint's death to benefit the life of others. This is, of course, most obvious in *Murder in the Cathedral*. All the plays have a kind of double pattern. On one level, they entertain; on the other hand they provoke thought on a higher plane. Eliot's plays embody his tragic sense of life which comes from the awareness of the mystery and inevitability of suffering. The human condition implies suffering. In his plays there are characters who exist on different level of consciousness. The choice they make in a certain situation reveals their character and the level of consciousness they have achieved. Thomas in *Murder in the Cathedral* is at the top of the scale in spiritual awareness and he chooses martyrdom. The element of tragedy in all his plays comes from the awareness that Man is imperfect, and that he suffers owing to the original sin. Traditional dramatic categories cannot be applied to Eliot's plays. They cannot be termed either as tragedies or as comedies. A.G. George calls them "existential plays". Drawbacks:- The fault most often found in his play is that his characters are not individuals and thus lack reality. The thought expressed is too often subtle and complex for easy understanding. The dialogues sound too unnatural and artificial. Another criticism is against the inclusion of artificial supernatural elements such as the Furies and the spiritual guardians Julia and Alec. The sudden switch from a light sense of social comedy to serious and intense philosophical dialogue is somewhat disconcerting. These are the various criticisms made against Eliot's plays. The experience presented in the play is also said to be too remote from ordinary life, to make effective drama. Conclusion:- Eliot's achievement and greatness cannot be diminished in the light of the criticism levelled against him. The work he has done in versification alone entitles him to fame. At his highest moments he achieves that fusion of drama and poetry which he advocated. The speech of the Chorus in *Murder in the Cathedral* is one clear example of such a fusion. Technically, Eliot achieved a great deal with his power of phrasing and the careful use of words. His plays are, undoubtedly, great literature and as such are assured of a permanent place in dramatic literature. Tags: Dramatist T.S Eliot • •

W <https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/04/t-s-eliot-as-dramatist-achievements.html>

58/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	29 WORDS	96% MATCHING TEXT	29 WORDS
	complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more comprehensive, more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate			
	SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)			
59/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	23 WORDS	81% MATCHING TEXT	23 WORDS
	poetry is "not turning loose of emotion but an escape from emotion, not an expression of personality but as escape from personality."	Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not an expression of the personality but an escape from the personality.		
	W https://elibrary.tucl.edu.np/bitstream/123456789/458/2/Chapter.pdf			
60/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	23 WORDS	97% MATCHING TEXT	23 WORDS
	Departing from the romantic tradition, which regarded poetry as continuous outburst of personal feelings, Eliot emphasized the impersonal nature of poetry. He			
	SA T S Eliots theory of impersonality A study of his ... etc.pdf (D35738531)			
61/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	19 WORDS	84% MATCHING TEXT	19 WORDS
	When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experiences; the ordinary	When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamatic disparate experience, the ordinary		
	W https://elibrary.tucl.edu.np/bitstream/123456789/458/2/Chapter.pdf			
62/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	11 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	11 WORDS
	these two experiences have nothing to do with each other;	these two experiences have nothing to do with each other		
	W https://elibrary.tucl.edu.np/bitstream/123456789/458/2/Chapter.pdf			
63/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	20 WORDS	90% MATCHING TEXT	20 WORDS
	in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new holes". It is	in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new It is		
	W https://elibrary.tucl.edu.np/bitstream/123456789/458/2/Chapter.pdf			

64/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	23 WORDS	93%	MATCHING TEXT	23 WORDS
<p>an objective correlative "a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that particular emotion."</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>					
65/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	19 WORDS	88%	MATCHING TEXT	19 WORDS
<p>the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence;</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>					
66/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	13 WORDS	95%	MATCHING TEXT	13 WORDS
<p>the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>					
67/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	50 WORDS	78%	MATCHING TEXT	50 WORDS
<p>a feeling that the whole of the literature of Europe from Homer and within it the whole of the literature of his own country has a simultaneous existence and a simultaneous order. This historical sense, which is a sense of the timeless as well as of the temporal and</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>					
68/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	15 WORDS	78%	MATCHING TEXT	15 WORDS
<p>of the timeless and of the temporal together, is what makes a writer traditional.</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>					
69/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	18 WORDS	73%	MATCHING TEXT	18 WORDS
<p>makes a writer most acutely conscious of his place in time, of his own contemporaneity."</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>					

70/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	34 WORDS	93% MATCHING TEXT	34 WORDS
<p>The past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past. A poet who is aware of this, will be aware of great difficulties and responsibilities.</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>				
71/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	20 WORDS	62% MATCHING TEXT	20 WORDS
<p>consciousness of the past and that he should continue to develop this consciousness throughout his career." 5.7</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AS hukla.docx (D54950956)</p>				
72/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	24 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	24 WORDS
<p>Murder in the Cathedral (1935) The Family Reunion (1939) the Cocktail Party (1949) The Confidential Clerk (1953) and the Elder Statesman. 6.1</p> <p>SA kamali (1).docx (D38240068)</p>				
73/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	19 WORDS	61% MATCHING TEXT	19 WORDS
<p>T. S. Eliot contribution • Religion, literature, and society in the work of T. S. Eliot 6.2 T.S.Eliot'</p> <p>SA T S Eliots theory of impersonality A study of his ... etc.pdf (D35738531)</p>				
74/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	24 WORDS	93% MATCHING TEXT	24 WORDS
<p>the more perfect an artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates; The</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>				
75/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	27 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	27 WORDS
<p>Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality.... The</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>				

76/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	88% MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
	<p>represents the blood kinship of 'the same people luring in the same place'.</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>			
77/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	17 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	17 WORDS
	<p>The Idea Of A Christian Society (193) and Notes towards the Definition of Culture (1948) –</p> <p>W https://www.britannica.com/biography/T-S-Eliot#:~:text=best%20known%20for%3F-,T.S.,and%20Four%20Q...</p>			
78/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	58 WORDS	95% MATCHING TEXT	58 WORDS
	<p>The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that emotion such that even the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience are given, the emotion immediately evoked'. In</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>			
79/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	20 WORDS	67% MATCHING TEXT	20 WORDS
	<p>the twentieth century. His literary career extended over a period of forty-five years. He dominated the English literary scene.</p> <p>SA Mahesh Z. Kikani T. S. Eliot _Twentieth Century British Poetry .docx (D113323270)</p>			

Eliot's influence on his contemporaries Eliot's influence has been complex and varied. He has given impetus to a number of poets to experiment with new forms. Eliot's successors owe him a special gratitude. According to G.S. Frazer, "Eliot is a craftsman who has provided his successors with new, sharp tools and as a teacher from whom they have learned how to use the tools and how to keep them clean." The contemporaries of Eliot, like Louis Macneice, C. Day Lewis, Stephen Spender, and Auden etc., show the influence of the style and imagery of *The Waste Land*. Images like, "a patient etherized upon the table" have become the common stock in trade of succeeding poets.

6.3.3 Eliot's universality Eliot was a spokesman of his age. He expressed the dominant anxieties and feelings of his age. As Kathleen Raine remarks: "It is not every poet who has taken upon himself to experience and transmute such a great weight of human life and suffering, or who has found himself compelled to be the prophet of truths so terrible." Although he is the physician of his age who endeavors to cure the diseased mind of modern life, yet he universalises contemporary predicament and consequently it becomes a part of the human predicament in every age and country. Dr. A.G. George remarks: "His great claim to originality consists in his recognising the artistic possibilities of the belief that anguish and sinfulness are intrinsic of human nature." so the artistic qualities of T.S. Eliot makes him a universal figure.

6.3.4 A Great Innovator of the English Language When T. S. Eliot started writing, he found English language dead. He started

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W <https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/influence-of-eliot-in-20th-century.html>

English language so rich that it became a suitable instrument for the expression of the complexities and intricacies of contemporary urban life. Thus he has broken from the nineteenth century tradition and given a new direction to English poetry. 6.3.5 Eliot's use of new techniques Eliot adopted and developed new techniques of communicating his views. He communicates his sense of the modern predicament by the use of conversational rhythms and imagery which he has drawn from urban life. He was a great innovator. When we consider his use of symbols, the use of implication, the use of myths as objective correlatives, his use of the mythical method for juxtaposing the past and the present in his poetry, is highly commendable in communicating his sense of the modern predicament. By the help of new techniques, he has telescoped in a few lines the whole ages and world-civilizations. His art of condensation and compression has enabled him to judge the present in its proper historical perspective. Although his new techniques cause difficulty and perplexity for the readers, yet he has given a new direction to English poetry by breaking it away from the nineteenth century tradition. T.S. Eliot's influence has crossed all the frontiers of languages and lands. His touch, to-day, is felt in poetry and criticism all over the world. No poet or critic since Coleridge has ever enjoyed such an authority and distinction. Eliot is a poet, a playwright, a critic and a publicist. In every branch of literature that he has touched, he has left the stamp of a genius. He has saved English poetry from its silly nostalgic ways and has brought back its intellectual dignity. England in the twenties got itself expressed in his poetry. His poetry presents his efforts to harmonize the personal and the impersonal in poetry. Eliot is the representative of the modern mind, keenly aware of his surroundings and its problems and of the needs of contemporary poetry, therefore, has a new way of expression, a new speech. His critical writings attempt at the correction of popular taste and offer a new way of appreciation and evaluation of literature. His plays also present a case for the revival of the poetic drama. 6.4

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W <https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/influence-of-eliot-in-20th-century.html>

82/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	129 WORDS	98% MATCHING TEXT	129 WORDS
<p>revolt against the descendant and exhausted poetry of his date. He completely broke from the thinned-out romantic tradition. As R.A. Scott James remarked: "Just as Joyce in his way, and Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf in their ways, had felt the necessity of a new mode of writing to express their inner sense of the passing show and the realities behind it, so was with Eliot." In the decadent period poetry became stereo-typed. It was remote from the living language of the people. Like Donne and Wordsworth, Eliot was a great architect of the English language who endeavored to restore it to life and vitality. His technique was to bring language into contact not only with current speech but also with European literary tradition. He made</p>		<p>revolt against the descendant and exhausted poetry of his date. He completely broke from the thinned-out romantic tradition. As R.A. Scott James remarked: "Just as Joyce in his way, and Dorothy Richardson and Virginia Woolf in their ways, had felt the necessity of a new mode of writing to express their inner sense of the passing show and the realities behind it, so was with Eliot." In the decadent period poetry became stereo-typed. It was remote from the living language of the people. Like Donne and Wordsworth, Eliot was a great architect of the English language who endeavoured to restore it to life and vitality. His technique was to bring language into contact not only with current speech but also with European literary tradition. He made</p>		
W		https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/influence-of-eliot-in-20th-century.html		

83/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	34 WORDS	74% MATCHING TEXT	34 WORDS
<p>the plot, for the more literary the words and phrasing, for the more musically sensitive the rhythm, and form auditors of greater sensitivity and understanding a meaning which reveals itself gradually."</p>				
SA		197208EP054.docx (D128526625)		

84/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	13 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	13 WORDS
<p>could draw imaginatively on a wide range of fully formulated</p>				
SA		FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)		

85/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	15 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	15 WORDS
<p>Literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical and theological standpoint,"</p>				
SA		FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)		

86/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	13 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	13 WORDS
<p>approach to the meaning restores the experience / In a different form" (</p>				
SA		FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)		

87/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
The Idea of a Christian Society and Notes Towards the Definition of Culture.		The Idea of a Christian Society (1939), and Notes Towards the Definition of Culture (1948).			
W https://www.britannica.com/biography/T-S-Eliot#:~:text=best%20known%20for%3F-,T.S.,and%20Four%20Q...					
88/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	37 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	37 WORDS
the incursions of Christ into the world, though powerful, are less healing than rending, a decadent but still disruptive form of ancient cannibalistic rituals in which body and blood are all too real, all too present. "					
SA ENDY THESIS CHAPTER 2.docx (D21764471)					
89/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	45 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	45 WORDS
T.S. Eliot exercised a strong influence on Anglo-American culture from the 1920s until late in the century. His experiments in diction, style, and versification revitalized English poetry, and in a series of critical essays he shattered old orthodoxies and erected new ones. 6.7		T.S. Eliot exercised a strong influence on Anglo-American culture from the 1920s until late in the century. His experiments in diction, style, and versification revitalized English poetry, and in a series of critical essays he shattered old orthodoxies and erected new ones.			
W https://www.britannica.com/biography/T-S-Eliot#:~:text=best%20known%20for%3F-,T.S.,and%20Four%20Q...					
90/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	100%	MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
all shall be well and / All manner of things shall be well" {					
SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)					
91/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	39 WORDS	85%	MATCHING TEXT	39 WORDS
basic resemblance, for example, between the vegetation myths of the rebirth of the year, the fertility myths of the rebirth of the potency of man, the Christian story of Resurrection, and the Grail legend of purification.		basic-resemblance between the vegetation myths of the rebirth of the year, the fertility myths of the rebirth of the potency of man, Christian story of the Resurrection, and the Grail legend of purification."			
W https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/mythical-method-in-eliot-poetry.html					
92/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	23 WORDS	97%	MATCHING TEXT	23 WORDS
In his notes to The Waste Land, Eliot referred to it as a work 'Which has influenced our generation profoundly'. Frazer'					
SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)					

93/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	18 WORDS	73% MATCHING TEXT	18 WORDS
	not indeed a "character", is yet the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest.		not being a character, he is a mere spectator. Yet he is the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest,	
	W https://samplius.com/free-essay-examples/the-portrayal-of-mythology-by-t-s-eliot-in-the-waste-land ...			
94/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
	What Tiresias sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem."			
	SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)			
95/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	16 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	16 WORDS
	The Burial of the Dead 13.5 A Game of Chess 13.6 The Fire			
	SA 5 ENM409 Anum fatima Assistant Prof Distance Education AMU.docx (D142996024)			
96/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	27 WORDS	89% MATCHING TEXT	27 WORDS
	introduces the theme of death-in-life. In her role as prophetess and in her position as tapped spectator the Sibyl is associated with Tiresias in the poem.			
	SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)			
97/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	14 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	14 WORDS
	Sibyl is associated with Madame Sosostris in the poem. 13.4 The			
	SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)			
98/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	12 WORDS	100% MATCHING TEXT	12 WORDS
	Good night, ladies, good night, sweet ladies, good night, good night.'		Good night, ladies, good night, sweet ladies, good night, good night" (71),	
	W https://journals.openedition.org/lisa/2903			
99/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	24 WORDS	85% MATCHING TEXT	24 WORDS
	Sitting upon a bank Weeping again the King my father's wreck, This music crept by me upon the waters,		Sitting on a bank, / Weeping again the King my father's wrack, / This music crept by me upon the waters" (
	W https://journals.openedition.org/lisa/2903			

100/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	19 WORDS	91% MATCHING TEXT	19 WORDS
<p>Eliot retains the essential suggestive quality of all symbolism, while limiting the suggestiveness to a clearly defined range</p> <p>W https://www.englishliterature.info/2021/03/classicism-in-t-s-eliot-poetry.html</p>		<p>Eliot maintains the essential suggestive quality of all symbolism, while limiting the suggestiveness to a clearly defined range.</p>		
101/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	12 WORDS	95% MATCHING TEXT	12 WORDS
<p>adaptation of the seven lines of a French poem by Eliot, '</p> <p>SA FOR URKUND.docx (D21154787)</p>				
102/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	15 WORDS	75% MATCHING TEXT	15 WORDS
<p>the approach to Chapel Perilous. This is the final stage of the Grail quest.</p> <p>SA Thesis Ref Mr. AShukla.docx (D54950956)</p>				
103/103	SUBMITTED TEXT	20 WORDS	96% MATCHING TEXT	20 WORDS
<p>A crowd flowed over London Bridge, so many I had not thought death undone so many.</p> <p>SA 110023676-Essay1-1645552.docx (D17975190)</p>				